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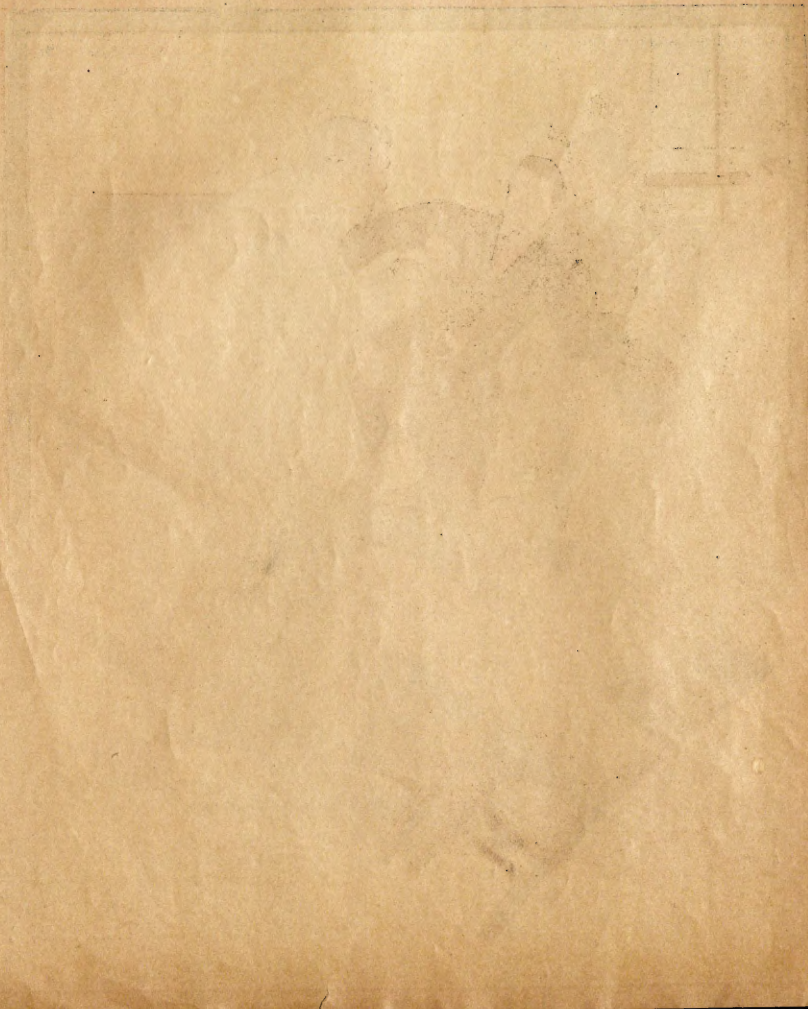
NICK CARTER STORIES

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

THE EMERALD SNAKE

NICK HAD PARTLY FREED HIMSELF AND AS THE CROOKS WERE APPROACHING TO BIND HIM MORE SECURELY HE KICKED OVER THE TABLE

STREET & SMITH PUBLISHERS NEW YORK



NICK CARTER STORIES

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THE EMERALD SNAKE;

Or, NICK CARTER'S DARING RUSE.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

A MYSTERIOUS ROBBERY.

"We seem to be up against it, Nick, up against it good and hard. That affair in which Currie played us such a scurvy trick, nearly getting away with part of Mrs. Sturtevant's fortune, to say nothing of inveigling my Cousin Cordelia into the foul mess—that was bad enough! But this—on my word, Nick, this heaps Pelion upon Ossa."

The speaker thus expressing his opinion of a crime that had been discovered that morning, scarce an hour before, in fact, was Mr. Percy Vandyke, bachelor, popular clubman, and one of the New York smart set, residing with his parents on Riverside Drive.

He was seated in a huge touring car that was moving at high speed toward Fordham, and his companions in the tonneau were Nick Carter and his right-hand assistant, Chickering Carter.

"You came after me this morning as soon as you learned of the crime?" said Nick inquiringly.

"Yes, immediately," Vandyke replied.

"State some of the circumstances," said Nick. "Why were you in Fordham so early, and how happened it that Mrs. Sturtevant is at the Archbold mansion? I thought she was an invalid and confined to her home with your people."

"She is an invalid, a sufferer from insomnia and nervous prostration, and, though she seldom goes out, she is not necessarily confined to the house. When abroad with her sister three years ago they were the guests of Lord Lovering and his wife, in Dorsetshire, who now are visiting America with their two daughters. They are old friends of the Archbolds, of Fordham, who entertained them with a large reception at their residence last evening.

"There were about three hundred invited guests. Unless I'm much mistaken, Nick, some one was there who was not invited. It's next to impossible to guard against intruders on such an occasion.

"But that's neither here nor there," Vandyke went on. "Mrs. Sturtevant was very anxious to go. Knowing this, and that too prolonged a strain might be detrimental to Mrs. Sturtevant, the Archbolds kindly provided for her to remain overnight with her maid. I was to call for them with the auto at nine o'clock this morning. That's why I was there, and why they happened to be there."

"At what time was the crime discovered?"

"About half past eight, just after I arrived with my car," said Vandyke. "That was the breakfast hour, and most of the family had come down, as usual. Owing to her poor health, none thought it strange that Mrs. Sturtevant had not appeared, and it was supposed that her maid, Rita Denny, who also had not been seen, was assisting her mistress to dress. A servant was sent up to their rooms, which adjoin one another, to tell them I had arrived; but she soon returned with the startling information that she had knocked repeatedly but got no response from within, and that both doors were locked.

"I went up there immediately with Mr. and Mrs. Archbold, and, after banging on the door with no better result, Mr. Archbold suggested that we break it open. I recalled, however, that Mrs. Sturtevant invariably sleeps with her window wide open, and I thought I might get in that way. So I ran out and saw that her window was open, as usual, and that I could get in it from the roof of the porte-cochère. I gained the latter from one of the other windows, and then by a long reach I was

able to look into the room—and lost no time in getting into it."

"What did you find?"

"I found Mrs. Sturtevant asleep in bed. Her maid, Rita Denny, lay on the threshold of an open door between the two rooms. She was clad only in her nightdress. She was unconscious, evidently from fright, and all efforts to revive her, up to the time I left the house to come after you, had proved futile."

"Did you discover any cause for her fright, assuming that was the trouble?"

"Not definitely; only evidence that the room had been entered during the night."

"By a burglar?"

"No one knows!" Vandyke exclaimed. "Though nothing in the maid's room appeared to have been disturbed, that of Mrs. Sturtevant was in terrible disorder. Her garments were scattered broadcast over the floor. Some of them were torn, and others twisted and tied in knots. A candelabra was lying on the floor. Strange to say, three candles it had contained were missing. In one corner of the room is a small flat desk, on which an inkstand had been overturned. The ink had run all over the top of the desk, and there were ink stains on the floor, the wall, and several pieces of furniture."

"You succeeded in arousing Mrs. Sturtevant?"

"Yes. She awoke after a vigorous shaking and application of cold water to her head. She is in the habit of taking a drug at night, owing to her insomnia, and she admitted that she took a larger dose than usual last night, which probably accounts for her lethargy."

"She did not awake, then, during the night?"

"No. Even the disturbance in the room had not aroused her, nor any other occupant of the house, except Rita Denny, who evidently awoke and left her bed, only to fall in a swoon upon seeing the intruder. At all events, that's how I size it up."

"It appears quite reasonable," Nick allowed. "Now, tell me what was stolen."

"Only one piece of jewelry," said Vandyke earnestly. "That's the strangest part of it, Nick, for there were costly rings, a watch, and an expensive chain, as well as a considerable sum of money, which the thief might also have taken. What he took, however, was the most valuable piece of jewelry of Mrs. Sturevant's very costly collection, her emerald snake."

"I have heard it mentioned," said Nick.

"It has an interesting history, aside from its great intrinsic value, which is above a hundred thousand dollars," Vandyke explained. "It was made in Amsterdam, originally for the Princess Kakaola, the daughter of an Indian rajah.

"The jewel appears to have brought its next owner bad luck," Vandyke went on, "for she was stricken with apoplexy while wearing it, and a few months later it was offered for sale. It happened that Morgan Sturtevant, who then was engaged to my cousin, was in Europe at the time, and he bought the jewel and gave it to his bride. He was killed in an automobile accident, you may remember, two weeks after their marriage."

"Mrs. Sturtevant has been an invalid ever since," Vandyke added. "There may be nothing in it, of course, but I'll be hanged if I wish to own the infernal bauble, despite its value."

"Describe it for me," said Nick.

"It is made of superb velvety green emeralds obtained from South America. It is nearly two feet long, and clasps in front, with the snake's head forming a pendant that rests on the wearer's breast. Its eyes are two superb diamonds."

"And that is the only thing that was stolen?" questioned Nick.

"So far as had been learned when I left," said Vandyke. "The leather case in which the jewel is usually kept was lying on the floor, but the emerald snake was missing."

Speeding around a curve in the attractive suburban road, they came in sight of a superb stone mansion; and, as they sped up the broad sweep of driveway leading to the house, a sedate, elderly man came out on the front veranda and signified, with a gesture, that the chauffeur should stop at the broad marble steps.

"That's Wilkins, the butler," said Percy Vandyke. "I think that's a physician's runabout under the porte-cochère. There evidently has been something doing since I left."

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN IN THE ROOM.

"This way, Mr. Vandyke, sir," said Wilkins respectfully, when the former alighted from the car with the two detectives. "Mr. Archbold saw you coming, sir, and wanted me to bring you in this way. Doctor Pelham is here, sir, and——"

He was interrupted as they were entering the spacious front hall. Mr. Archbold, an aristocratic man in middle life, approached them quite eagerly, and Vandyke hastened to introduce both detectives.

"I am delighted to know you, Mr. Carter, glad you could come out here," he said cordially, while shaking hands with Nick. "We are confronted with a most extraordinary crime. I fear it will tax even your rare detective genius. Apprehending that you might not be able to look into the case, and feeling that an investigation should be begun without delay, I have called in the local police. Captain Vane, of the precinct station, is here, but when he learned that you were expected very soon he decided to defer investigations until you should arrive."

"I am glad he did so," said Nick. "I prefer to view evidence first-hand and before anything has been disturbed, whenever possible. I know Captain Vane very well. He is a capable officer."

"A Mr. Carsley came with him, an Associated Press reporter, who happened to be in the precinct station when I telephoned," Mr. Archbold added. "I have not yet said much to him about the case, for I'm not sure publicity will be desirable. I thought I would await your advice."

"A wise precaution," said Nick. "I will be governed by the circumstances."

"Doctor Pelham, our family physician, has succeeded in reviving Mrs. Sturtevant's maid, but she has not yet come down from her room. My wife tells me that she still is a little dazed, but not otherwise the worse for her experience. Doctor Pelham is somewhat puzzled by the fact that the girl lay so long in a faint, but he is absolutely sure that she was not feigning unconsciousness. Mrs. Sturtevant also is positive that the girl is perfectly trustworthy."

"I will talk with her a little later," said Nick.

Mr. Archbold led the way into a large, handsomely furnished room, the broad windows of which overlooked

a south exposure of the park and grounds. There he introduced his wife and two daughters, both attractive young women in the twenties; but Mrs. Sturtevant, who had come down from her room some time before, needed no introduction to the detectives. A pale, delicate-looking woman, then wearing a look of mingled apprehension and anxiety, she greeted both graciously, and expressed her gratitude for their immediate interest in the affair.

Captain Vane, who had arrived scarce ten minutes before, was talking in one corner with the reporter who had accompanied him, and he complacently awaited his turn to speak with the detectives, to whom he introduced his companion.

"I decided I wouldn't butt in, Carter, when told that you were coming," he said agreeably, after their greeting. "Shake hands with Mr. Carsley, of the Associated Press."

Nick complied, surveying the reporter with more than cursory interest, for he was vaguely impressed that he had seen him before.

The latter was a well-dressed man of medium build and no very distinctive physical characteristics. He appeared to be in the thirties, an intellectual-looking man, wearing his hair unfashionably long, and a neatly trimmed mustache and beard, which served to mask most of his lower features. Gold-bowed spectacles augmented this look if intellectuality, while a remarkably keen light in his penetrating eyes, accentuated perhaps by the brilliancy of his polished glasses, convinced Nick that he was a man of more than ordinary mental power and nervous energy.

"I'm pleased to know you, Mr. Carter," said Carsley, while he met with a smile the detective's searching scrutiny. "I saw you for a few moments in Chicago three years ago, when you were a government witness in the notorious Dexter dynamiting case."

"I rarely forget a face," Nick replied. "I thought I had seen you."

"On no other occasion, I believe," rejoined Carsley. "I was talking with Captain Vane in his office when he was summoned here, and I ventured to accompany him. I hope you have no objection to my remaining?"

"None, providing you promise to publish nothing without my sanction," Nick said pointedly.

"I agree to that, I assure you."

Nick turned away, still unable to remember just when he had seen the young man. His impressions were dispelled at that moment, however, by the entrance of Doctor Pelham and Mrs. Sturtevant's maid, Margarita Denny.

The girl was about twenty years old, but she had a look of experience beyond her years, and there was no sign of girlish diffidence in her deportment. She was pale and a little nervous, but Doctor Pelham remarked, as he led her into the room:

"There, you now are all right, my girl. Sit down and be calm while you tell these people what you know about the crime. You have nothing to fear."

"No, no, absolutely nothing, Rita," said Mrs. Sturtevant, smiling kindly. "We all know that you are in no way to blame."

"Thank you, madame," she replied. "I hoped you would not blame me. I was so terribly frightened—but I don't mind that, madame, since nothing at all was stolen."

Observing her closely, Nick had seen her glance at Mrs. Sturtevant's rings and then at the leather jewel case, which had been brought down and then was lying closed on the library table.

"Permit me to question this girl, Mrs. Sturtevant, without any interruptions. I am a detective, Miss Denny, and wish to get at the exact facts as quickly as possible. Answer my questions, therefore, as briefly as you can.

"Tell me," said Nick, "what time it was when you went with Mrs. Sturtevant to her room for the night."

"It was nearly twelve o'clock, sir," said Rita.

"Before all of the guests had left the house?"

"Yes, sir. It was after one o'clock when I heard the butler closing the doors."

"Had you then retired?"

"Yes, sir. But I was nervous, and could not sleep."

"Was the door open between your room and Mrs. Sturtevant's?"

"Yes, sir. I left it open, in case she should awake and want me."

"Tell me precisely what you did after going up with Mrs. Sturtevant."

"Why, sir, I——"

"Begin at the beginning," Nick interposed kindly. "Did you lock the door of both rooms that leads into the hall?"

"Yes, sir, I did, for fear of madame's jewels."

"Now continue; what did you do next? Tell me as near as you can remember."

"I helped madame disrobe, and I laid aside her garments for the night. After she had retired, I prepared her sleeping powder and gave it to her, and then I put her watch and jewels in a drawer of the desk and locked it."

"Did she tell you to do so?"

"No, sir; there was no need of her telling me. I always have the care of madame's jewels at such times, and lock them up for the night. I thought the desk drawer the safest place for them. But afterward I—I did not leave all of them there."

"It's lucky I didn't, perhaps," she added, "for the thief might have found madame's necklace before he saw me and fled."

"You are getting ahead of your story," said Nick, again preventing any interruption. "Did you go to bed immediately after locking the jewels in the desk drawer?"

"Not quite, sir," said Rita. "I opened madame's window, as usual, and lighted a small night lamp, which she always keeps burning in case she awakes. Then I undressed and went to bed."

"But not to sleep?"

"No, sir. I was very nervous because madame's most valuable jewel, her emerald snake, was on my mind, and set me to thinking of burglars and the open window in madame's room.

"I couldn't sleep, and after I heard the doors locked and the house grew still I felt even more restless and anxious. Then an idea came to me, and I acted upon it. I thought a burglar, if he should get in and find the leather case empty, would think the necklace had been removed and put in the house safe until morning, and that he then would not search our rooms to find it. So I got up and took it out of the case, sir, and looked for a good hiding place for it."

"Where did you put it?" asked Nick, hoping for a moment that the jewel had not been stolen, after all.

"I caught sight of madame's long silk stockings lying under one of the chairs, sir," she replied. "I said to myself that a thief would never think of stealing, or searching, a pair of stockings lying on the floor. So I slipped the emerald snake into one of them, sir, and left them under the chair."

"Where did you then put the jewel case?"

"I left it in plain sight on the desk, sir, as if it contained nothing of value," said Rita. "It's lucky I did so, perhaps, for I see that madame is wearing her watch and rings, and she must have found the necklace when she picked up her stockings this morning."

"You returned to bed, Rita, after hiding the jewel?" said Nick.

"Yes, sir."

"You felt relieved, no doubt, and went to sleep?"

"I did, sir. My nerves were more quiet."

"Now tell me when you awoke, and what aroused you."

"I don't know, sir, what time it was. I know only that I awoke and thought I heard a noise in madame's room. It sounded as if she were getting up, sir, and I sprang out of bed and stepped to the open door. And then I—I saw him, sir!" she added, with a convulsive sob.

"Saw whom?"

"The man in madame's room, sir. Oh, he was horrible—horrible!"

"Tell me what he was doing, and how he looked," said Nick. "Did you see him distinctly?"

"Oh, no, sir!" Rita exclaimed, shuddering and pressing her hands to her breast. "The light was very dim, sir. He was crouching in the middle of the room and looking straight at me, sir, as if he had heard me coming."

"Was the man large or small, tall or short? How was he clad?"

"I don't know, sir; I don't know. He looked like a small man in dark clothing, but I cannot be sure. For I saw only his eyes distinctly—they frightened me! And I had only a brief glance at him, sir, for he sprang up and darted at me the moment I reached the door. I tried to scream, sir, but I could not utter a sound. And then, sir, when I saw him coming, I tried to turn and run; but I—I must have fainted. I knew nothing more until the—the doctor revived me. That is all I can tell you—all I can tell you, sir."

"I do not wish to question her further at present," Nick said, addressing Mrs. Sturtevant. "You may presently tell her that the necklace has been stolen, and then kindly remain here with her until I return. I may wish to resume my inquiries. I now will begin an examination of the evidence. We will go up to Mrs. Sturtevant's room, Mr. Archbold."

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERY SOLVED?

Carter made no objection when Percy Vandyke, Carsley, and Captain Vane followed him up to the second floor, to which Mr. Archbold immediately conducted him. Chick also followed.

Upon arriving at the door of the room Mrs. Sturtevant had occupied the previous night, Nick paused for a moment and said a bit curtly, though addressing no one in particular:

"Remain in the hall and leave Chick and me to size up this evidence. You will only be in our way if you crowd into the room."

All obeyed him except Carsley, who stepped just over the threshold the better to view the scene and note the movements of the two detectives.

The room was in tolerable order, compared with its appearance when the crime was discovered, as described by Percy Vandyke. The floor no longer was covered with Mrs. Sturtevant's discarded garments, twisted and tied in knots, most of them having been required in her toilet that morning. But the bed had not been made. The torn lace curtain still dangled from its rod. The silver candelabra lay where it had fallen. Stains left by spilled ink were conspicuous in all directions.

One singular fact at once appealed very strongly to Nick Carter—that the criminal, after tipping over the inkstand, had smeared his hands with the black fluid and left stains and imprints of them in nearly every part of the room. Some of them were so high on the wall, moreover, as to suggest at once that the miscreant was either a very tall man, or one of remarkable reach and agility.

"By Jove, this looks like the work of a lunatic, or a malicious vandal," said Chick, pointing to the inky smears and imprints.

"Very true," said Nick, glancing sharply around. "It is, by the way, a very significant fact."

"Significant of what?"

"Can you conceive of a professional crook thus leaving imprints of his hands for police inspection?" Nick pointedly inquired. "What crook doesn't know that his hands now present even more positive proof of identification than the Bertillon system itself?"

Walking to the open window, Nick gazed out at the roof of the porte-cochère. Here and there on its flat surface were a few faint spots of dry earth, as if some person had recently walked on it. Nick knew that Vandyke had reached the room from one of the windows, however, and that his shoes would not have left any such earthy spots.

"The intruder entered this open window, all right, and reached it by climbing to the roof of the porte-cochère," he remarked to Chick, who had followed him to the window. "It could have been easily done by means of that trellis and the corrugated conductor near by."

Turning back, Nick strode across the room and into the adjoining hall. As he passed the group of men at the door, he said quite bluntly:

"Wait here and do nothing until I return. I shall be gone but a few moments."

Leaving them to express their surprise to one another, he hurried down the stairs to the side hall and out through the porte-cochère. A very few moments enabled him to find what he sought.

In the dark soil of a flower bed flanking the gravel driveway, plainly discernible and distinctly outlined in the damp earth, were several imprints similar to those left in the room. None were to be found in the hard soil of the driveway, however, nor on the sweep of lawn near by.

Nick studied the several imprints very carefully. At the end of about five minutes he rose, abruptly returned to the house, and, without a word to any of his observers, hurried into the room again and began a careful inspection of the floor, the rugs, the ink stains; now crouching, now on his hands and knees, at times nearly

flat on the floor to use a lens he had drawn from his pocket.

Presently he picked up the silver candelabra and examined a smooch of ink on the standard. He then dived under the lower edge of the chiffonier, and a few moments later he suddenly arose with a few tiny white particles in one hand—and something concealed in the other.

"Well, well, gentlemen, this is very remarkable," he said abruptly, with a laugh. "There seems to be nothing to it."

This surprising announcement fell with various effects upon the ears of each of his hearers, corresponding chiefly with one's degree of interest in the case and relation to it.

Mr. Joseph Carsley merely joined in Nick's laugh, and nodded approvingly, with the air and aspect of one already anticipating the nature of the detective's discoveries.

The brief amazement of all was ended by the hurried approach of Wilkins, the butler, who touched the policeman's arm and said respectfully:

"You are wanted at the telephone, Captain Vane."

"H'm; is that so?" Vane hesitated for a moment, then quickly added: "Hold your horses, Carter, until I return. I don't want to miss any of this. I'll be back in half a minute."

Then he turned and rushed down the stairs, followed by Wilkins.

"I say, Nick, what do you mean?" Percy Vandyke cried impulsively. "Nothing to it, man! You don't mean that you've found a clew to the robber, a clew to the man's identity?"

"The robber was not a man."

"Some women, then?"

"No, nor a woman."

"Nor a woman!" echoed Vandyke amazedly. "Not a child, then? You surely don't think it was a child!"

"Neither man, woman, nor child," said Nick emphatically.

"Please explain, then," said Mr. Archbold, stepping into the room. "Don't keep us in suspense."

"I will do so," said Nick. "I will explain why only one of Mrs. Sturtevant's jewels, by chance the most valuable, was found and stolen by the intruder. I will tell you why Rita Denny saw him crouching on the floor, why he impressed her as being a small man, whom she could not definitely describe, and why his eyes impressed her so terribly. I will inform you, moreover, why he upset the ink, why he dabbled in it and left these smears and imprints on all sides, why he tore the curtain and twisted Mrs. Sturtevant's garments into knots, and also what has become of the three candles which were in this candelabra."

"If you can do that, covering all of the ground, Mr. Carter, you certainly are a wonder," Carsley roundly declared. "I wouldn't have believed it possible."

"Listen!" said Nick, still steadfastly regarding him. "Reversing the order of the points I intend to disclose, what do you make of these?"

He held out his left hand, displaying its contents.

"Why, they appear to be particles of something white," said Carsley, intently viewing them through his glasses.

"Exactly," said Nick. "They are particles of paraffine."

"From the missing candles?"

"Yes."

"But why these tiny particles? All of the candles are missing. What became of them?"

"The robber ate them," said Nick, with assurance.

"Ate them!" echoed Vandyke incredulously.

"The evidence is conclusive," Nick insisted. "Here is half an inch of one that fell from his hands and rolled under the chiffonier. He did not attempt to find it, probably being too absorbed in eating the others. Observe the marks left in it by his teeth. These tiny particles fell from his lips when he devoured the candles."

"But, good gracious, it seems incredible," protested Vandyke, though in reality convinced by the evidence Nick had produced. "How can you account for it? Was the thief a lunatic, some half-starved fellow, or some demented man who——"

"I already have said, Vandyke, that the thief was not a man," said Nick. "Let's go a step farther. Study these hand prints on the wall. Here is one quite perfectly outlined. It shows the thumb and fingers distinctly."

"Well, well, what of it? That has been obvious from the outset."

"Notice the shape of the hand," said Nick, spreading his hand on the wall near by. "Compare it with mine. Observe that the thumb is too large and elongated, the fingers too long, when compared with this compact, muscular palm, for the hand to have been that of a man. You can see with half an eye that it does not belong to the human species. It was left by the hand of an animal."

"Not the hand of a monkey?" cried Vandyke, suddenly seeing the point.

"More likely that of an ape, unless I'm much mistaken," said Nick, stepping back and pointing through the open window. "It is not far, you see, from here to the zoölogical gardens. If you will telephone over there, I venture asserting that you will learn that one of the animals of the monkey family, either an ape, or an orang-utan, or the like, has very recently escaped from its cage and——"

Nick was interrupted at this point by a cry from Captain Vane, just then returning from the hall, and a hearer of the detective's last remark.

"Eureka!" he shouted. "You're right, Nick; and hereafter my money goes on you. You have hit the nail on the head."

"Ah, indeed!" Nick said, a bit dryly. "Your telephone call?"

"Was from Sergeant Dix, now in charge at the precinct station," said Vane, as he entered the room.

"What had he to say?"

"Enough to clinch your own theory," said Vane. "It appears that one of our patrolmen was attracted by the shouts of boys in the Bronx Park about an hour ago, and, upon looking into the matter, he found that they had discovered a large ape in one of the trees. To make a long story short, it proved to belong to the zoo, and to be that favorite of the boys and the children, that wonderfully intelligent old ape known as Corporal Flynn.

"The animal has been captured, and now is in the station house," Vane quickly added. "Word was at once sent to Tommy Coyle, one of the keepers in the zoo, and one for whom Corporal Flynn has always displayed a special liking. Coyle soon arrived upon the scene, where he succeeded in enticing the ape from the tree, and took him to the station house."

"Have you learned anything more?"

"Yes. By communicating with the zoo, Dix learned that the animal was missed only an hour ago, that alterations are being made in that part of the building in which such animals are kept, and that Corporal Flynn had contrived in some way to slip out of his cage and escape from the building. I asked Dix about the animal's hands and feet, and he states that they are—as black as ink," Captain Vane said pointedly, in conclusion.

"Did you ask whether Corporal Flynn was wearing an emerald necklace worth about a hundred thousand dollars?" Nick inquired.

"Well, that was hardly necessary," smiled the officer. "I should have been told in that case without the asking."

"I'll be hanged if I can easily swallow it!" exclaimed Vandyke.

"Not swallow it!" Carsley turned upon him with a look of astonishment. "How can you help swallowing it? Is all this evidence to be ignored? How else is it to be explained?"

Nick noticed the force with which Carsley derided Vandyke's remark, and that the latter was inclined to resent it; but he checked both with a gesture, and said:

"Cut that out, gentlemen, for work that may prove more profitable. We now know that an ape escaped from the zoo last night. What more natural than that he should have come in this direction and taken to the trees in the park surrounding this house?"

"Yes, yes, that's another point," Carsley quickly put in.

"I have not the slightest doubt that he did so," Nick went on. "It may be that the illumination attracted him, or he may not have arrived here until after the last of the guests had departed. I can confidently assert, however, that he saw this open window, revealed by the dim light left in the room by Rita Denny. Apes, as you know, are both inquisitive and mischievous. Corporal Flynn no sooner saw the open window, than he was impelled to enter."

"Certainly." Carsley nodded. "That's just the size of it."

"He rent the lace curtain when entering," Nick proceeded. "Hearing it rip, the noise may have irritated him, and he forthwith tore the curtain to shreds. Not content with that, his mischievous instinct being aroused, he set about twisting and knotting all of the loose garments lying around. He was too keen, however, to make very much noise."

"That is characteristic of them, Mr. Carter, perfectly so," Carsley declared.

"Incidentally, while thus employed, he got hold of the silk stockings, and the emerald snake probably slipped out of one of them. Its brilliancy attracted him, and, animallike, he hung onto it. The glitter of the silver candelabra caught his eye. In order to reach it easily, he sprang upon the desk, and upset the ink. Feeling the moisture, he dabbled in the fluid both with his hands and feet. It is obvious, now, who ate the candles. It is perfectly plain, now, why only one piece of jewelry is missing. Some move that he made finally aroused Rita Denny and brought her to the door."

"I see—I see!" Vandyke now cried. "This explains why the creature was crouching on the floor, supposed by her to be a man; also why his gleaming eyes affected her so deeply."

"Exactly. When she fainted, and fell, seeing him dart toward her, moreover, it undoubtedly frightened the animal. He probably snatched up the glittering necklace, unless he still had hold of it, and then fled by the way he had entered. That's all there is to the case, Mr. Archbold. The mystery is solved."

"But the necklace—how to recover it?"

"I will not advise you to consult Corporal Flynn," replied Nick, smiling. "It appears obvious, however, that the ape carried away the jewel. How far he carried it is an open question. He may have dropped it within a hundred yards of the house, or perhaps not within five hundred. But wherever he dropped it, it should be found, if not already found. I would advise you to begin a thorough search in all directions, and to advertise a liberal reward for the return of the jewel by any chance finder. That, sir, is the best advice I can give you."

"And capital advice it is, too," Carsley said roundly. "If I can be of any assistance, Mr. Archbold, I beg that you will command me. My connection with the press may be of advantage. Let's organize searching parties at once and begin a systematic hunt for the lost jewel."

"We're with you," Vandyke cried approvingly. "And we owe you ten thousand thanks, Mr. Carter, aside from your bill for the service rendered. Send that in as soon as you like."

"Your gratitude will suffice," laughed Nick, as he withdrew from the room. "My work on the case has ended so quickly that you are very welcome to so slight a service."

He turned back for a moment, nodding in a friendly way to Carsley and Mr. Archbold, and then he descended the side stairs with Chick and went out through the porte-cochère.

Pausing briefly in the driveway, he pointed to the edge of the flower bed.

"There are some of Corporal Flynn's tracks, left by the animal before he entered the house," he remarked. "Have a look at them."

"Yes, yes, I see," Chick replied, crouching to examine them.

"See anything peculiar about them?"

"I can't say that I do. They look like ape tracks, all right."

"Thumbed like an ape's foot, eh?"

"Precisely like."

"Yes, precisely," Nick smilingly allowed, as they walked away. But there was something in Nick's manner that Chick did not understand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REAL DISCOVERY.

One hour after leaving Archbold's residence, Nick Carter was seated in his business office with Chick and one of his younger assistants, Patsy Garvan. He had not spoken of the case since leaving the scene—but he had not ceased thinking of it. He knew that Chick would tell Patsy all about it.

In Fordham, covering the ground for half a mile in every direction, a hundred men, women, and children were engaged in an eager search for the lost necklace.

None doubted that it was lost in the manner described. Not even a clairvoyant could have detected that Nick Carter's conduct was only superficial, his statements unreliable, his designs directly the opposite to what then appeared certain. He had, in fact, completely blinded Chick, which was not an easy thing to do.

It was Chick who broke the silence at length by asking abruptly:

"Is Vandyke going to phone you, Nick, when that costly bauble is found?"

Nick looked up and came out of his abstraction.

"He'll never phone, Chick, if not until the emerald snake is found by the persons now seeking it."

"You think it will never be found?"

"On the contrary, I'm quite sure it will—but we are the ones who must find it."

"We!" Chick cried, staring.

"That's what I said."

"Great Scott! I thought you had ended your work on the case?"

"I have not yet begun it."

"But why have you left me in the dark?" Chick demanded. "What kind of a game have you been playing?"

"One indicating that I believe all that a certain crafty rascal has tried to make me believe," said Nick pointedly.

"What rascal?"

"He who stole the emerald necklace."

"But you deduced, I thought, that Corporal Flynn was the thief."

"That is precisely what I aimed to make all others think, Chick, and I'm very sure I fooled them."

"Fooled them! No sane man would doubt that."

"I accomplished my object, then," said Nick, more gravely. "The rascal who planned and committed this remarkably clever crime will believe, like all the others, that the evidence found on the scene convinced me that the ape was the thief. That was the rascal's design. He reasoned that, by stealing this one very valuable jewel under such circumstances, and leaving all the others untouched, none would doubt that Corporal Flynn was the robber, and that none would even suggest searching for another."

"You know, then, that the ape was not the thief?" said Chick.

"Positively."

"But he must have been in the room."

"You are wrong. Corporal Flynn was never inside the Archbold residence."

"But the footprints, the hand marks, the eaten candles, the eyes described by Rita Denny, the——"

"Stop a moment," Nick interrupted. "I now will tell you, not what I pretended to see, but what I really discovered.

"To begin with, the moment I saw those hand prints on the wall, I knew they were not those of a human hand," Nick explained. "I already have told you how I knew it, and why I at once suspected that they might be those of an ape, a suspicion more readily tenable because of the near location of the zoo."

"That's plain enough," Chick nodded.

"Naturally, of course, that reminded me of Poe's famous story, in which two women were killed by an orang-utan, which climbed to an open window of their room on a fourth floor.

"Then, as Patsy has intimated, the coincidence aroused my misgivings. I distrusted the likeness between the two crimes, and the entire combination of circumstances in the Fordham case. Instead of impressing me as true, I was at once led to suspect that all of the evidence had been craftily put there to indicate that a like crime had been committed, and to aver suspicion from the true cause, the scheme, and its advantages evidently having been, suggested to the criminal by the story mentioned.

"Obviously, if I was right," Nick went on, "the best course for me to take, that from which we might derive the most advantage, was to pretend to accept the evidence at its face value, making my deductions accordingly, and fixing the theft on the ape, thus blinding the real criminal to my true suspicions and designs.

"I proceeded to do so, therefore. Looking from the window, I sized up the possibilities presented, and then I slipped out of doors alone for a few minutes to consider the matter and seek for evidence I suspected would be there. I very soon found it—enough to clinch my suspicion. There were about a dozen tracks in the soil of the flower bed. Most of them appeared to have been left by the ape's feet. I found four smaller ones, however, presumably those of his hands when he dropped on all fours. Strange to say, however, there was not a single print of the left foot, nor any imprint of the right hand."

"By Jove! I ought to have noticed that," said Chick. "What did you deduce from it?"

"My deduction was very quickly determined by something else," Nick replied. "Can you conceive of an ape, Chick, with a wart on the middle of his right wrist, and another in a corresponding position on the bend of his left ankle, just where it naturally would meet the ground?"

"Well, I might conceive of such a thing," laughed Chick; "but I should require ocular evidence before having much faith in it."

"To be sure," Nick nodded. "Well, I found in all of the impressions a small circular dent, very suggestive of a wart, though I very soon hit upon the true explanation of it."

"What did you make of it?"

"The dent was caused by a button," said Nick.

"I don't quite catch on," said Chick perplexedly.

"The explanation is simple, nevertheless," Nick replied. "The prints were not left by an ape. They were made by a man, the criminal, who wore on his hands a pair of gloves so made as to form a perfect impression of an ape's foot and hand. That on his right corresponded to the ape's right foot; that on his left was a counterfeit of the ape's left hand. The dent in each impression was caused by one of these snap buttons, which, on the wrist of each glove, held it in place."

"That gave you the key to the whole business, eh?"

"Well, it helped," said Nick, smiling. "Obviously, having only one glove corresponding with each extremity, the rascal could form only a single impression, and that is why I could find no imprint of the left foot, nor the right hand."

"Certainly."

"He evidently reasoned that that point would be overlooked, or the hand print, though somewhat smaller than the foot, would be mistaken for that of the left foot."

"I see."

"We should find, upon looking into the matter, which I think will be hardly necessary, that the size of the gloves correspond perfectly with the size of Corporal Flynn's hands and feet, and we will establish that fact, if it becomes necessary. Returning to the house, I at once detected other confirmatory evidence. There was no print of a right hand on the wall, though the tips of the fingers of the glove worn on that hand had touched it here and there, as if to indicate that both hands of the ape

were soiled with ink. Obviously, the ape's foot would not have touched the wall."

"Certainly not."

"There were prints of the right foot on the floor, however, but none of the left," Nick added. "Now, notice this piece of candle and the marks of teeth in it. He was a clever fellow indeed who undertook to give color to his trick by pretending to eat three paraffine candles. He threw a shoe, however, when he left this piece with teeth marks in it. The marks show that the teeth were too small and square on the edges to have been the teeth of an ape.

"Thus, you see, I detected the nature of the whole scheme," said Nick. "Now, a few words about the details of it, the persons open to suspicion, and the work that devolves upon us in order to run them down and recover the stolen jewel."

"What are your views, Nick?" Chick inquired.

"I will state them briefly," Nick replied. "With what we now know, the plot can be easily sized up. The escape of the ape was not accidental, though evidence indicating that it was an accident will probably be found. As a matter of fact, Corporal Flynn was stealthily removed from the zoo last night, and designed by the rascals to become the only object of suspicion. I do not think, however, that he was taken to the Archbold residence. All of the evidence of his presence there was manufactured."

"No doubt."

"After the crime had been committed, and incidental advantage taken of the ink found in the room, the ape's feet and hands were covered with ink by the scamps, and the animal was then liberated. It probably was known that he would not go far away, and that he would be discovered early this morning."

"That was about the size of it," Chick agreed.

"Corporal Flynn, then, was only an innocent factor in the crime," said Nick. "His liberation and the subsequent handling of him must have been accomplished by some one thoroughly acquainted with his nature and habits, and who knew that he could easily govern the animal."

"It must have been one of the keepers employed in the zoo," said Patsy.

"There seems to be no reasonable doubt of that," Nick replied. "It is up to us, therefore, to discover which one."

"By Jove, this provides us with an almost positive clew to one of the gang," Chick observed.

"We have an equally sure clew to another: Rita Denny. I am sure of her guilt, because she described the small size, the crouching attitude, and more particularly the gleaming eyes of an ape. I am positive, however, that the ape was not in the house. Why did she describe an ape, then, instead of a man—unless she is in league with the man who really was there?" Nick shrewdly argued.

"Gee, that does clinch it!" cried Patsy, quick to see the point. "She gave herself dead away."

"We have at least, then, two strings to our bow," said Nick. "There is still another."

"You suspect some one? Who?"

"Mortimer Currie."

"Holy smoke!" Patsy exclaimed. "That swell guy who tried to rob Mrs. Sturtevant once before, and who gave us the slip so craftily."

"But why are you sure of it, Nick?" Chick questioned.

"For two reasons," Nick explained. "I have not forgotten his extraordinary trick when we cornered him and his confederates after that Fifth Avenue robbery. His chief confederate, Tom Langham, was killed, you remember. Currie pretended to commit suicide by swallowing cyanide of potassium. The tiny amber vial from which he appeared to have taken it fell from his hand when he pitched over upon the floor. I picked up the vial and at once detected the odor of cyanide. It appeared, of course, to be a palpable case of suicide. Currie looked like a man struck dead."

"That's right, too," Patsy put in. "He made good in feigning death, all right."

"Ten minutes later, however, while we were engaged in securing the other crooks and making preparations for their removal, Currie craftily seized an opportunity to slip out of the house, and thus made his escape."

"Not only escaped, but has eluded us ever since," Chick added. "But why do you suspect him of the Fordham theft?"

"Because of the letter he wrote me two days after the previous crime," said Nick. "I still have it pigeonholed."

He reached into the desk while speaking and selected it from a package of letters. It was dated several months before, and it plainly evinced the character of the writer, as well as his intense bitterness in having been thwarted by the detective. Nick read it aloud to his assistants, as follows:

"'*Mr. Nicholas Carter, New York City.*

"'DEAR SIR: It's a long lane that has no turning! You now are congratulating yourself, no doubt, upon having recovered the Sturtevant property and upon having foiled my designs and exposed me under true colors; but I enjoy at least the satisfaction of having slipped through your fingers, and the anticipation of some day breaking even with you. I will do more. I will repay the debt with compound interest.

"'You, Carter, have sent me to the bad. But for you, I should have successfully accomplished my object, made good in this one transgression to which adverse circumstances drove me, and thereafter would have maintained my integrity and position in society. You have prevented all this, and have sent me irretrievably to the bad. You shall repent having done so.

"'Henceforth my bent is evil. I will have the living the world owes me. Nothing shall stand in my way. You pride yourself, Carter, upon being a master detective. Mark this:

"'I will commit a crime before long, the audacity of which shall stagger you, and your failure to fathom it shall evoke the derision of all who know you.

"'This shall be my first step toward paying the debt I owe you.

"'Beware my last step. MORTIMER CURRIE.'"

"I see the point," said Chick, after listening attentively. "You think this was the crime he had in view when he wrote that letter."

"I don't know that he then had it in view," Nick replied. "I think it more than probable, however, that he is the man we want. The curious character of the crime leads me to think he has tried to make good his threat in this letter."

"It's odds you are right."

"One other fact leads me to think so. Currie was a society man, who would know just how to take advantage of last night's reception. He was probably there in disguise."

"Did you find evidence of that?"

"Evidence that the crook was concealed in Rita Denny's bedroom," Nick replied. "Though I did not enter her room, nor do anything to betray I suspect her, I stood where I could see her bed through the open door I detected that a little dust on the carpet under the foot of the bed had recently been disturbed, it having been rubbed into tiny rolls."

"By some one hidden under the bed."

"Undoubtedly," said Nick. "I'm convinced, therefore, that the crook was one of the guests at the reception, probably an uninvited one, and surely one who could play the part of a society man successfully. I think he joined Rita Denny in her room, and was concealed there when Mrs. Sturtevant retired. After the crime had been committed, the girl evidently allowed herself to be drugged, that the genuineness of her unconsciousness should not be questioned. That's how the trick was turned, I'm very sure."

"The question now is how are we to find the rogue and recover the jewel?" said Patsy. "It strikes me, chief, we ought to lose no time in getting a move on."

"I have deferred operations only to let the news spread, that the belief may become general that the ape was the thief, the necklace hopelessly lost, or picked up by some dishonest person who intends to keep it. That will throw the crooks off their guard and render them less wary."

"But what are your plans?" Chick inquired.

"Rita Denny must be shadowed," said Nick. "Sooner or later she will visit the thief, or he will call to see her, that she may receive her share of the plunder. I'll assign that work to you, Patsy, and you'd better start at once for the Vandyke residence. Mrs. Sturtevant will have returned home from Fordham by this time."

"That's good enough for me, chief," cried Patsy, hastening to make ready. "I'll very soon have Miss Denny under my eagle eye."

"In the meantime, Chick, we'll run out to the zoo," Nick added. "We may be able to determine which keeper most likely would have had a hand in such a crime."

CHAPTER V.

TOMMY COYLE.

Corporal Flynn was "at home" at two o'clock that afternoon—not only at home, in fact, but also receiving much more than customary attention from a throng of visitors who, having heard of the robbery, were moved with curiosity to see the ape that had got away with a hundred-thousand-dollar necklace, only to drop it or hide it in some nook, which a hundred eager seekers were unable to discover.

"He certainly looks like a wise old guy," said Chick, at Nick's elbow.

"Notice the size of his hands," Nick quietly replied. "They compare perfectly with those imprints on the wall. They must have been carefully measured by the crook, or by a confederate employed here."

"Have you any suspicion?"

"Yes. I suspect the keeper, Thomas Coyle, for whom the ape is said to have a special liking, the man sent to recover him this morning. We'll hunt him up presently and——"

Nick cut short his remark. He had caught sight of the very man of whom he was speaking—but was much more impressed by the face of a woman then talking with him. Her signs of mental disturbance, together with a sinister gleam in the eyes of the man, impressed Nick quickly. A keen reader of faces, he saw at a glance that the couple had been discussing something of serious importance. They separated at that moment, however, the woman walking rapidly away, and Nick called Chick's attention to her.

"She has been talking with that keeper, and has something on her mind," he said quietly. "Both facts are significant. Slip away and trail her to cover. Learn who she is and where she lives."

"I'll find out, all right, and will see you later."

Chick nodded and slipped away through the groups of people absorbed with interest in Corporal Flynn.

After watching the keeper a few moments, Nick walked over and spoke to him.

"Where shall I find a keeper named Thomas Coyle?" he inquired.

"I'm Tommy Coyle. What d'ye want?" replied the keeper.

Nick was not surprised. The suspicion aroused by the looks of the woman described had led him to suspect the identity of the man. He betrayed no sign of his distrust, however, but merely said agreeably:

"I don't want much of anything, Mr. Coyle, to tell the truth. You are the man who brought Corporal Flynn back here this morning, aren't you?"

"I am, sir."

"He is harmless, I suppose?"

"That he is, sir, barring he's crossed. Then the divil himself couldn't manage him," Coyle vouchsafed, with a convincing nod. "Why d'ye ask, sir?"

"Only because I wondered how a wild animal, having escaped from captivity, could be secured and returned to his cage without considerable trouble," Nick blandly explained. "You accomplished it single-handed, I am told."

"I did, sir."

"Was the animal docile when you found him? Could you manage him?"

"Sure, sir, I could," Coyle roundly asserted, attaching no significance to the admissions into which he was being led. "We're like brothers, Corporal Flynn and me, sir. I'm the only keeper who can manage him."

Though it did not surprise him, in view of the fact that Coyle was the man who had been sent to recover the ape, Nick heard his avowal with considerable satisfaction. It clinched his suspicion that Coyle was the thief's confederate, the man who had liberated the ape and looked after him while the robbery was being committed. He knew, of course, that Coyle would not have been led into such a self-betrayal, indirect though it was, if he had had any idea that the truth was suspected.

"How did the animal happen to escape, Mr. Coyle?" Nick inquired.

"Well, sir, there's been some repairing going on and things are a bit upset around here," Coyle readily explained. "The Corporal was moved to this part of the building, and the moving of his cage may have loosened the fixture of the door. I've had a look at it, sir, and found one of the rods had slipped out of place."

"Who has been held responsible for it, Coyle?" asked Nick.

"Jim Lacy. He was discharged this morning, sir, for not knowing things were not all right."

"That seems very unjust," Nick gravely observed.

"So it is," Coyle quickly agreed. "It was no great fault of Lacy's, I'm thinking, for all he had charge of the brute."

"How long had Lacy been employed here?"

"Near a year, sir."

"Generally steady and reliable?"

"He was that." Coyle nodded, and then, with a sharper gaze at his questioner, he abruptly added: "Why d'ye pump me with so many questions?"

"Only because I am interested in the case of Mrs. Sturtevant, the owner of the lost jewel," he said blandly. "It is perfectly apparent, of course, that the ape got away with it."

"Sure 'tis."

"In case the necklace cannot be found, an attempt may be made to hold the managers here responsible for the loss. Much obliged for your information," Nick added, as he drew away.

"That's all right, sir," Coyle grinned. "Come again."

CHAPTER VI.

A DARING RUSE.

Nick Carter's talk with Tommy Coyle was suggestive. It convinced Nick not only that Coyle had had a hand in the robbery, but also that Lacy was likewise open to suspicion.

The discharge of Lacy, and his own success in ferreting out the probable facts without revealing his suspicions, suggested another promising step to the mind of the detective, one involving dangers from which most men would have shrunk, but a step which Nick immediately determined to take.

He learned from the city directory that James Lacy lived in Harlem. Instead of going directly to the man's home, however, Nick returned to his own business office, where he left a brief note for Chick, departing in disguise about ten minutes later, clad in a rough, somewhat seedy woolen suit, and with a revolver in each hip pocket.

Nick arrived in Harlem at four o'clock, where he learned that Lacy was not at home, but that he might be found in a near billiard hall, or in a hotel on the opposite corner. Nick sauntered into the office of the hotel, which was far from being first-class, and accosted the clerk.

"Seen Jim Lacy 'round here?" he tersely inquired, leaning over the counter.

"He was here——" The clerk glanced sharply over the half score of men gathered around the office. "He must have gone out. Look in the barroom. He lost his job to-day and may be drowning his sorrow."

Nick walked through the arched doorway at the rear of the office and made his way through a corridor leading to a café and saloon overlooking the side street.

Half a dozen men were lined up at the bar. Three of the booths were occupied by late lunchers. In one of the others, that nearest the rear end of the room, a stocky, dark-featured man of thirty was writing on a scrap of paper with a lead pencil—a man answering the description of Lacy, which Nick already had obtained.

After stopping to buy three cigars, one of which he lighted, Nick walked over to the booth in which the man was seated.

"Hello, Lacy," he said familiarly, at once taking a seat at the opposite side of the narrow table. "Have a cigar while I have a short talk with you. My name is Dolan."

Starting slightly, with a sharp stare at the intruder, Lacy quickly thrust his paper and pencil into his pocket. His brows knit frowningly, and instead of accepting the cigar which Nick had laid on the table, he answered a bit gruffly:

"Dolan, eh? Well, you've got the best of me. I don't know you."

"That cuts no ice," said Nick significantly. "A stranger may turn out to be a man's best friend. I'm going to be yours, providing you don't balk at the offer."

"I reckon I can get along without you, Mr. Dolan," Lacy coldly vouchsafed.

"You'll change your mind, Lacy, after I have put you wise," Nick pointedly insisted. "You lost your job at the zoo this morning, didn't you?"

"What if I did?" growled Lacy. "There are others?"

"That's right, too," Nick agreed. "I can put you next to one that will land you in Easy Street."

"So that's your game, is it? You want me to take a hand with you in some kind of a job?"

"That's about the size of it."

"Is it off color?"

"Not too bad," said Nick. "Smoke up, Lacy, and I'll tell you about it. I'll show you how you can make——"

"Hark you, Dolan!" interrupted Lacy, with an ugly gleam in his eye, "I don't know you from a side of leather, and I don't want to. If you have something crooked in view, you keep it to yourself and work it out alone. For I'll have no hand in it."

Nick did not answer him for a few moments, pretending he was waiting for him to calm down.

In the meantime, during the subdued intercourse of the two, a man had entered from the street and approached the bar, saying a few low words to the head bartender.

He was not a prepossessing fellow. A hump between his shoulders indicated that he had a curvature of the spine. His figure was reduced by it, being less than five feet tall, while his head was thrust forward in a way augmenting his repulsiveness. He was a dark, shabbily clad fellow, apparently about fifty years old, with a scraggly beard and bushy, black brows, under which his eyes gleamed and glittered like those of a rat in a hole.

After whispering to the bartender, the humpback stepped into a lavatory adjoining the barroom. There he whipped out a knife, with which he quickly cut a piece of soap nearly to a point, and thrust it into his pocket. Seizing a towel, he then saturated one end of it under the faucet, and returned to the barroom.

Winking significantly at one of the bartenders, he hurried back of the lower end of the bar and fell to polishing one of the mirrors fixed on the side wall—a position somewhat removed from the several men then drinking at the bar, and one out of observation by Nick Carter, though directly in view of Lacy, who sat faced in the opposite direction.

Looking up a few seconds later, immediately after his threatening rebuff of the detective, Lacy caught sight of

this humpback—and saw his hand moving rapidly over the mirror.

As quick as a flash, or so it seemed, the humpback wrote with his piece of soap on the looking-glass:

"Look out, Jim! You're up against Nick Carter. We must get him."

Gazing at him in the mirror, the humpback saw that the communication had been read, and with a sweep of the wet towel he obliterated the writing.

Oblivious to any of this, as were other occupants of the barroom, so quickly had it been done, Nick resumed his talk with the suspected man.

"You hold your horses, Lacy," he quietly advised. "I don't think you're a crook; nothing of the kind. Nor am I steering you up against anything crooked—that is to say, nothing worse than a scheme to get the best of some crooks. You hear me! I can put money in your pockets—a good big bundle of it."

Lacy had recovered from his surprise, and from the fear occasioned by the information so craftily given him.

"See here, Dolan," he said, "what are you giving me? What do you mean by getting the best of some crooks?"

"You'd go up against that, if there was enough in it, wouldn't you?"

"I might."

"Sure you might, Lacy, and sure you would—as would any other man who's out to gather in some coin," Nick forcibly argued. "I might work the scheme alone, as far as that goes, but I can do it better with you to help me."

"How'd you know I lost my job?" asked Lacy.

"Tommy Coyle told me. He was telling me about Corporal Flynn, how the ape got away with the necklace worth a hundred thousand dollars, and he said you were discharged because the animal escaped. I'm going to put you wise to something, Lacy."

The humpback, seeing that Lacy had taken his cue, had again written on the mirror:

"The Rookery—rear door! I'll be there. String him till I butt in."

The humpback then erased the soap-written words, dried the mirror, and a moment later he disappeared. In the meantime the interview in the booth was continued in tones too low to be heard outside.

"Wise to something?" Lacy echoed Nick's last words. "Cut loose, then, and put me wise."

Nick started to speak, then turned abruptly and glanced around the barroom, aiming with this display of caution to impel Lacy to suggest a move to safer quarters. That it would be the headquarters of the gang, in that case, or some rendezvous where he would be likely to meet the chief crook, the knave presumably then in possession of the Emerald Snake, Nick felt reasonably sure.

"I was only making sure that we'll not be heard," Nick observed, as he turned again to the waiting rascal. "Now, Lacy, about the job. To begin with, do you know the value of the necklace Corporal Flynn got away with?"

"A hundred thousand bucks, you've just said."

"It's worth more than that."

"That would satisfy me—or even half of it," Lacy pointedly added.

"I'll tell you how we can get it," said Nick impressively.

"Well, I'm listening."

"The Emerald Snake, as the jewel is called, is not lost. It was not taken by Corporal Flynn, and is now in hands of crooks who stole it. If we can——"

"Hold on!" Lacy suddenly checked him. "If you know what you're talking about, Dolan, and there's anything in the dope you're giving me, we had better seek a safer place for handing it out. I know a good place."

"You're right, I'm thinking," Nick readily agreed. "Get a move on, then, and I'll follow."

The two men rose, and left the place.

CHAPTER VII.

MAN AND GUN.

Nick Carter accompanied Lacy to a street near the water front. It was uninviting, yet tolerable; neither one thing nor the other. The next street east was disreputable—but Lacy reached it indirectly.

Night was coming on when Lacy entered an alley running between two brick buildings.

The alley brought up at a high board fence. Beyond it was the rear elevation of an old wooden house. Every window was closed. Every curtain was drawn. No door was open. There appeared to be no way of reaching the front of the house, except by going through it, or back through the alley and around to the next street.

Lacy opened a gate in the fence and entered a small yard, about six by twelve, unpaved, damp, and dismal. It contained nothing but a clothesline between two posts.

"It's not much of a crib," growled Lacy, while he unlocked a back door. "An aunt of mine rents it because it's cheap. I hang out here with her to keep her company, and to get the bit she'll leave when she croaks. That won't be long, I reckon, for a sawbones sent her to the hospital last week. That's why I'm alone here."

Lacy rattled through this explanation while he was unlocking the door.

Nick followed him into the house, into a cheaply furnished dining room, then so dark that he scarce could see his way.

Lacy lit an oil lamp and placed it on the table.

"Sit down, Dolan, and smoke up," said he. "I'll hit my pipe. If you'll have a drink, there's a drop still in the bottle, I'm thinking."

"No drink for me, Lacy, until after we've had our talk," Nick said firmly.

"Then, Dolan, get down to business. What's it all about?"

They sat face to face at the table in the miserable room, as at that in the barroom booth, half an hour before.

"It's about that Fordham case," Nick began. "I'm going to tell you, Lacy, just what I think of it. To begin with, as I've said before, Corporal Flynn did not get away with the emerald necklace. As a matter of fact, he was not anywhere near the Archbold house."

"How do you know it?"

"First, because I know that you, Lacy, would not have been so careless as to have left things so that the ape could escape," Nick proceeded to point out. "It's dollars to doughnuts that you left the ape's cage all right, and that he did not escape, but was *taken* out."

"Who would do that?"

"One of the gang who committed the robbery. I'll tell you which one in half a minute.

"I felt pretty sure of this when I first heard of the

robbery," Nick continued. "The story that was given out didn't sound good to me. It looked to me like a job, a scheme to get hold of a valuable bit of property and leave enough evidence to convince the police that Corporal Flynn was the thief. Having that hunch, Lacy, I reckoned I'd have a look around the Archbold place and see what I could find, and I found enough evidence to convince me that I was right."

"What was it, Dolan?"

"Some tracks in a flower bed near the window the ape is said to have entered."

"Ape's tracks?"

"They looked like ape's tracks—but they were phony. Not ape's tracks at all."

"You'll have to explain," growled Lacy. "I'm not wise. If they looked like ape's tracks, how did you know they were not?"

"Because there were not enough of them," said Nick. "There were prints of only the right foot and the left hand. I could tell that by the thumbs. Furthermore, I found other evidence that clinched my belief. A round dent in each track—the mark of a button. The kind of button that holds on a pair of gloves. Now you know, Lacy, and I know, that Corporal Flynn doesn't wear gloves. They were a pair made to resemble Corporal Flynn's hand and foot—but they were on the hands of the crook who made the phony tracks, and who got into the house and committed the robbery. All the evidence in the house and out of it was phony."

Not for a moment had Lacy's frowning gaze left the face of the detective. He had listened attentively, at first with only a display of cursory interest, but now he appeared more deeply impressed.

"If you are right about this, Dolan, we might manage to get some coin out of it."

"That's just the job I have in view."

"But what sent you after me? Why do you want me to help you?"

"Because you're on friendly terms with one of the gang."

"Explain," said Lacy. "Which one of the gang do I know?"

"Tommy Coyle."

"You think he had a hand in it?"

"I *know* he did, because he's the only one who can handle Corporal Flynn outside of his cage," Nick explained. "I know you are innocent, of course, for you've been discharged for letting the ape escape. So I decided I'd get next to you and ask you to help me, which will give you a chance to queer the game of the crooks and put a fat bundle in your own pockets."

"That's very good of you, Dolan, and you're all right," Lacy declared a bit dryly. "Now, what's your game? Tell me about that."

"My game ought to be plain enough," Nick replied. "If we can get next to the crooks and steal the necklace from them, we can sell it at something like its value, or else nail the reward offered for it. The crooks will never dare to squeal, you see, and we shall have the game in our own hands."

"That sounds all right," Lacy admitted. "But how are we to get next to the gang?"

"That ought to be easy," Nick quickly argued. "You're well acquainted with Tommy Coyle, and know most of his pals, don't you?"

"Yes, most of them."

"One named Currie?"

"I don't recall that name."

"You may know him by some other name," said Nick.

Lacy shook his head doubtfully, but a sharper, momentary gleam that appeared in his sinister eyes convinced Nick that his earlier suspicion was correct, and that Mortimer Currie was, indeed, the knave he chiefly wanted.

"Well, mebbe so," Lacy presently replied. "But who is Currie, and what about him? Where does he fit in?"

"He's the man who go away with the jewel and who now has charge of it. We must find a way to nail it before he can turn it into money. If you can get next to Tommy Coyle, and learn where Currie hangs out, we can easily turn the trick. You stand well with Coyle and must worm it out of him. In case he fights shy, we must watch him until we catch him meeting Currie, and then track Currie to cover. That must be our first move in the game. Our next——"

"There'll be no next, Mr. Dolan! You throw up your hands—or you'll be a dead one!"

The interruption, for which Lacy had been impatiently waiting, came like a flash from a man, who, concealed all the while in a near closet, suddenly stepped into the room. In his right hand he held a revolver, aimed straight at the detective's head.

Nick looked up and beheld the man he had met in the Archbold residence that morning, the alleged representative of the Associated Press—Mr. Joseph Carsley.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAN IN DISGUISE.

It was about two o'clock that afternoon, it may be remembered, when Chick Carter parted from Nick at the zoo and started to shadow the flashily clad woman seen talking with Tommy Coyle.

Chick easily shadowed her to Harlem, to an inferior three-story apartment house within half a mile of the hovel which the humpback had aptly termed the Rookery, where she entered the narrow vestibule at the top of the steps without using a key.

Chick was near enough to see that she went up to the second-floor flat. After waiting briefly to size up the house, he crossed over and stole into the vestibule, where he found the woman's name under an electric bell: "Miss Kate Lacy."

Retracing his steps, Chick entered a drug store on a corner nearly opposite, where he bought some cigars and a glass of soda, thus blandly paving the way to question the clerk.

"Are you acquainted round here?" he inquired. I'm looking for a family named Lacy."

"I know a woman named Lacy. She lives over yonder on the second floor."

"Any family?"

"Only one lodger—or *said* to be a lodger," the clerk answered, with a wink and a grin. "She has one brother, too, but he doesn't live with her."

"I infer," Chick remarked, smiling, "that her reputation is not very good."

"Not good enough to hurt her!"

"I guess it's not the family I'm looking for. What is the lodger's name?"

"Joe Carsley. He gets his dough by writing for the newspapers, I'm told, but I can't vouch for it. Ah, talk

of the devil and you'll hear the thud of his hoofs! There comes Carsley, now. He appears to be in a rush."

Chick gazed out cautiously and saw him—the man he had seen in the Archbold residence that morning.

Carsley was hurrying up the street, and upon reaching the house mentioned he darted into it as if he had not a moment to spare.

"By Jove, this looks like something doing," thought Chick, as he quickly sized up all of the circumstances. "Carsley, eh? It's more than a coincidence, his being on the scene of the crime this morning. It's about ten to one that he had a hand in the job, and was there to see what we made of the evidence."

Bent upon learning something more definite, Chick left the drug store and stepped around the corner, where he quickly adjusted a simple disguise, then returned and studied the house more sharply.

There was no sign of life at Kate Lacy' windows.

The lower flat was occupied, but none of the tenants were in sight, while the upper flat appeared to be vacant, a circumstance of which Chick thought he could take advantage.

Crossing over, he again inspected the vestibule and the stairway leading to the second floor. Then he ventured in, seeing no one, and stole up to the door of Kate Lacy's apartments, where he paused to listen. This attempt to play the eavesdropper proved futile, however, for not a sound from within reached his ears.

"There must be an interior hall having two doors," he said to himself. "I'll see what the top floor has to offer."

Stealing up the bare stairs, Chick used a picklock and quietly opened the door of the upper flat. The floors were bare, the rooms destitute of furnishings. Moving noiselessly, Chick proceeded to one of the rear rooms, a kitchen, where he discovered outside of the window a narrow platform with an iron railing around it, such as is frequently seen on tenement houses.

"If there is one on the floor below, by Jove, I may be able to use it," he muttered, while he quietly opened the window and looked out.

He discovered what he was seeking—a similar platform outside the window of Kate Lacy's kitchen. There was a jar of milk on it, also a small basket of provisions, and the lower section of the window was open several inches.

Then for the first time Chick heard the voice of Carsley, also his hurried steps on the kitchen floor.

"You wait here, Kate, until I return," he was forcibly directing. "I'll find Jim, all right, either in the billiard hall or the hotel, and I'll mighty soon settle this business! It now looks as if we must make a quick get-away, unless we can contrive to corner—but I'll see about that! You wait here until I return. I'll show up in half an hour."

"I'll wait, Joe, anyway," the woman replied. "Don't stop to impress that on me, but get a move on."

"He evidently is going out the back way," thought Chick, then hearing the bang of a near door. "Something has happened to alarm him, and he's off on a job of some kind. Does he hope to corner Nick, or——"

Chick's train of thought was abruptly broken by the appearance of a figure in an alley back of the house. It was not the erect, clean-cut figure of Carsley, well dressed and debonair. It was a slouching, crouching, roughly clad figure, with a hump between the shoulders and a gait like that of a huge spider.

Nevertheless, Chick Carter was sure of his man.

"Out in disguise, eh?" he said to himself. "The game certainly is closing in! Go it, you rascal! I cannot overtake you, but I can wait until you return. I'll then see what's doing, all right."

The humpback had darted through the alley and into the near street, where he quickly vanished around a corner.

His mission was to find Jim Lacy, but he discovered something more—of which, as already has appeared, he promptly took advantage.

Chick continued to wait and listen. He heard Kate Lacy moving around the kitchen for some little time, and then the sound of her steps toward the front of the house.

Going noiselessly to one of the upper front windows, Chick looked down and discovered the woman leaning out of an open window below. She appeared to be on the floor, or sitting on a low ottoman, with her head, shoulders, and arms over the sill and her gaze fixed on the street.

"Watching for the rascal to return," thought Chick. "By Jove, if he does not show up too soon, and she remains there with her head thrust from the window, I may be able to get in there unheard. I may as well be on the roof, or in the cellar, as here. I'll make the attempt."

After a last glance at the woman, who had not moved from her position, Chick returned to the kitchen window. Measuring the distance with his eye, he saw that he could easily reach the rail of the platform below by hanging at arm's length from the upper one. Proceeding noiselessly, he let himself down until his feet touched the rail, which he found would easily bear his weight, and in another moment he was crouching outside of Kate Lacy's window. Looking in, he saw that the kitchen door was partly closed, and by slow degrees he quietly raised the sash and stepped into the room, leaving the window as he had found it.

Stealing to the door, Chick then could look through the dining room and a narrow hall adjoining a bedroom, and see most of the front parlor.

Chick decided to await developments and to hear what Carsley would have to report when he returned, so he crept quietly into the bedroom for temporary concealment, and waited patiently.

The woman crouching at the window watched restlessly, until a clock on the parlor mantel struck six; then, with an abruptness convincing Chick that she now saw Carsley returning, she sprang to her feet and closed the window.

Half a minute later came quick steps on a bare stairway, those of a man moving with almost frantic haste, and the humpback presently bounded into the kitchen, then rushed through the dining room and the narrow hall to rejoin the waiting woman.

"Holy smoke!" thought Chick, as the uncouth figure sped by the bedroom door. "Has he struck a snag? Has he bolted here for safety? What's the meaning of it? Why is Carsley masquerading in this beastly disguise?"

These questions were answered in part almost as soon as they were asked, and Chick Carter was given an additional surprise.

For the humpback, upon entering the parlor, came out of his thickly padded coat and his repulsive disguise, casting both upon the floor, and then he straightened up un-

der true colors. The hump had vanished. The crouching figure rose erect. And Chick Carter, peering cautiously from his concealment, beheld not the bearded countenance of Joseph Carsley, but the clean-cut, smooth-shaved, and viciously determined face of the much-wanted crook already suspected of the jewel robbery: Mr. Mortimer Currie.

"Thundering guns!" thought Chick, a bit startled. "Currie himself, as sure as I'm a foot high. This explains why Carsley was on hand this morning. Yes, by Jove, and we may have been up against more than we bargained for."

Chick was quick to see the serious significance of the circumstances, but he then had no time for further consideration. For Mortimer Currie, hurrying out of one disguise and into another, that worn when he entered the house, had begun a rapid interview with the somewhat excited woman.

"Don't be alarmed," he cried, noting her paleness when she observed his haste. "There's nothing to fear—not yet! We've got him."

"You mean——"

"Whom should I mean?" Currie cut in impatiently. "I mean that infernal Nick Carter. I discovered him talking with Jim in the Woodbridge barroom. He was in disguise, but I knew him, all right, the moment I put my eyes on him. I made Jim wise by a bit of trickery and told him what to do. He's to lure Carter to the Rookery, where I'll be on hand with Coyle to hold him up. That's why I'm in such a rush. I must reach the Rookery before they do."

"But suppose——"

"Hang supposing!" Currie again interrupted. "We cannot act on suppositions. The game has broken too badly. I must know the facts, Kate, and be governed by them. Carter is a tough man, difficult to deceive, and hard to buck against. If I find he suspects too much for our personal safety—well, I can see his finish!

"You are sure, of course, that it was Patsy Garvan you saw watching the Vandyke dwelling this morning?" Currie quickly added, after a brief pause.

"Sure?" Kate exclaimed derisively. "Of course I'm sure! I ought to be, Mortie, for I know him by sight as well as I know you."

"And you are sure he did not see you?"

"Yes, absolutely. I bolted at once, instead of undertaking to confer with the kid. I knew there was nothing in taking that kind of a chance," Kate added. "I flew out to the zoo to tell Coyle, or Jim, therefore, so that one of them might inform you. Jim had been given the dump, so I had to tell Coyle."

"That's what had come off when Nick started me after this woman," thought Chick, all the while listening intently. "Patsy was seen on the lookout for Rita Denny, and the truth was suspected. Coyle must have informed Currie, sending him after some fellow named Jim, and giving rise to the present situation. That's about the size of it—but who the dickens is Jim, and what kind of a move has Nick been making?"

The interview in the parlor had been of brief duration. Scarce ten minutes had passed since the humpback came plunging into the room. Now, disguised again as Carsley, having completed his preparations for a speedy departure, Currie took a revolver from a table drawer and said abruptly:

"Now, Kate, I'm off for the Rookery. You must join me there in an hour—both you and the kid."

"The kid?" Kate stared amazedly. "How can I get her?"

"Phone her. Tell her to meet you here."

"But suppose she cannot get out? Her mistress may——"

"As I have already told you, Kate, I'm not acting on suppositions," Currie insistently interrupted. "The situation must be met just as it is, and whether I can straighten things out and save our skins by getting Nick Carter and turning him down, remains to be seen. If I can, we shall be all right. On the other hand, we shall be all wrong, with only one course open for us—a division of the plunder and a quick get-away to parts unknown."

"Oh, that's your scheme, is it?"

"Unless I can down Nick Carter and head off the work of his assistants, and I think I can accomplish it, of course, and shall know within an hour," Currie darkly added. "But, mind you, we must be prepared for the worst. That means up stakes and get out, and the kid shall not be left in the lurch. She has been true-blue and played her part to the letter."

"That's right, Mortie, for fair!" Kate Lacy cried approvingly. "I see the point."

"Get her on the phone, then, and tell her to come here at once," Currie quickly directed. "Warn her she's being watched, mind you, and she'll contrive to slip away unseen."

"Trust her for that."

"If things come our way, she can return in a couple of hours and manage to square herself. If things go wrong, on the contrary—well, she must take her share and jump with the rest of us."

"So long, then! I'll be off at once."

There was a look of ugly determination on Currie's face, a gleam in his eyes spelling nothing less than murder, when he turned and left Kate Lacy, rushing out of her apartments almost as hurriedly as he had entered them.

Chick Carter, strange though it may seem, made no move to prevent the desperate rascal's departure.

CHAPTER IX.

THREE OF A KIND.

If Nick Carter, seated in the miserable hovel into which he had pretended to be lured by Jim Lacy, was surprised by the sudden sensational appearance of the man known as Carsley, it was only because he was not the man expected.

Nick had felt sure from the first, in fact, that Lacy suspected something wrong, and would not have ventured there alone with him. He had expected some one to interfere, therefore; either Tommy Coyle, or Mortimer Currie himself, or possibly the entire gang; but it was only to draw them from cover, enabling him to verify his suspicions and secure adequate evidence to convict the scoundrels, that he had boldly undertaken such a subterfuge and deliberately placed himself in their hands.

Carsley's entrance was immediately followed by that of Tommy Coyle, who bounded into the room from the gloom of the adjoining entry, also with a revolver in his hand and a threatening fire in his frowning eyes.

"That's right!" he shouted. "Up with your hands, Dolan, or down and out you go."

Lacy also had sprung up, ready to mix in if it became necessary.

Nick laid both hands on the table, indicating that he had no intention of showing fight, but his gaze was still fixed on Carsley's bearded face. He now saw what he had failed to detect in the Archbold residence that morning—an expression greatly accentuated by the man's threatening eyes. It now not only explained Nick's first impression that they had previously met, but it also plainly revealed the scamp's identity, despite his very artistic disguise.

"Currie himself," flashed through Nick's mind. "By Jove, there have been forces at work on which I have not figured! This miscreant has been keeping tabs on me from the first."

Detecting Nick's sharper scrutiny, Currie strode nearer and cried quickly, with augmented ferocity:

"You sit quiet! If you move foot or finger——"

"Oh, I'm not going to move," Nick curtly interrupted. "Calm your fears, if that's the trouble with odds of three to one. Take my word for it, I am very well pleased with this turn of affairs. I came here expressly to get better acquainted with you rascals—if for nothing more. I already have succeeded."

"You have, eh?"

"That's what I have, Mr. Currie, and the sooner you come out of that disguise, and fly your true colors, the sooner we shall strike bottom in this business."

"Ah, you recognize me, now," Currie spoke with a sneer.

"Yes, perfectly well."

"But you've got nothing on me in that respect. I know you, Carter, as well."

"I supposed no less," Nick bluntly retorted. "Otherwise I should have enlightened you in a very few moments."

"There is no occasion—absolutely none," said Currie, with sinister emphasis. "I need no enlightenment from you. I'm wise to every move you have made in this case, and you ought to know what that means."

"Ought I?"

"It means that I am prepared to foil your every move."

"Take a tip from me, Currie, and don't be too sure of it," Nick coolly advised.

"I can do without your tips, also," snapped Currie. "Go behind him, Tommy, and get his bracelets. Secure his hands behind him, and then get his guns. We'll have him well fixed in two shakes of a lamb's tail."

"In half the time, Mort, if done in my way."

Nick Carter made no resistance. He coolly allowed Coyle to handcuff him and remove his weapons, which the scamp quickly thrust into his own pockets. Not content with that, he rudely jerked the disguise from the detective's face and tossed it into a corner.

"I'll have one good look at you," he growled viciously. "The time may come when I'll need to remember you. Holy smoke! it's the bloke who questioned me this morning."

"Yes, Coyle, you'll have lots of leisure in which to remember me," Nick said pointedly, as the fellow drew back in amazement.

"I will, eh?"

"That's what you will, Tommy; take my word for it."

"You mean in Sing Sing?"

"That's precisely what I mean."

"Sing Sing be hanged!" Coyle cried. "Get that idea out of your noodle box, old man, or it might turn you dippy."

"I'll chance it."

"No Sing Sing for mine! If there's any sing-singing to be done, that'll be up to you, Mr. Carter. You'll sing another tune, I'll wager, before we're through with you."

"Sit down, Tommy, and hold your tongue," Currie now commanded, slipping his revolver into his pocket. "Let me do the talking with this fellow. I have something to say to him."

Waving both of his confederates aside, he threw himself into the chair Lacy had vacated, directly opposite Nick; and then, with an impulsive gesture, he removed his disguise and tossed it upon the table.

Nick did not wonder, then, that he had failed to recognize the scamp that morning. For Currie looked thin and haggard, compared with the society man who had suddenly gone to the bad months before, and who so craftily had escaped arrest when cornered by the detectives. That his career since had been one of dissipation and vice was plainly evident.

Just then, however, resentment and bitter hatred, vengefulness and implacable determination were chiefly pictured in Currie's desperate countenance. He glared across the table at Nick, as if he recalled in one passing moment all of his reverses, all that he had suffered, and for all of which he held the detective responsible.

"So, Carter, you wouldn't be fooled, eh?" he said. "You wouldn't be blinded by the evidence I prepared for you. You're a wise old gink! Tell me, hang you! where I left myself open."

"A crook always leaves himself open, Currie," Nick coldly answered. "The devil's hoofs may always be found where he has passed."

"Tell me——"

"I shall tell you nothing, Currie, from which you can derive any advantage," Nick sternly interrupted.

"Advantage—bah!" ejaculated Currie. "Do you know the meaning of that word? What greater advantage over you than I now possess could I possibly require?"

"None, perhaps, viewing it from your standpoint."

"My standpoint?"

"That's what I said."

"I heard what you said," snapped Currie. "But what do you mean?"

"If you lack the brains to see what I mean, I certainly shall not inform you," replied Nick, with caustic dryness. "As I already have said, I shall give you no information."

"Rats!" snarled Coyle, irrepressibly. "We don't need any information. We know all there is to know."

"You do, eh?"

"That's what we do, Carter, and you'd be better off if you knew less," added the scamp, as snappish as a vicious dog. "What you know is going to cost you something. You stirred up the wrong bunch, blast you, when you——"

"Dry up, Tommy, and let me have my say," Currie sharply interrupted, again checking his hot-headed confederate. "There'll be time enough, then, for you to dip in your oar. For all that, Carter, he speaks only the truth."

"Impossible!"

"What's impossible?"

"For that rascal to speak only the truth," Nick dryly declared.

"You may take my word for it, then, that we know every move you have made in this game," Currie asserted, with a sneer. "It was very clever, Carter, your pretending to swallow all of the evidence found this morning and to believe all that you heard. You did it to blind me, to open a way to the subterfuge in which we have trapped you. But you have succeeded only in overleaping your mark."

"Is that so?" queried Nick indifferently. "Down and out, eh?"

"Are you not?"

"Possibly—from your standpoint," Nick again remarked.

"That's good enough for me," Currie quickly retorted. "I very soon learned that you had Patsy Garvan watching the Vandyke residence. That alone was enough to convince me you suspected Rita Denny, and that my scheme to fool you had miscarried. You have sharp eyes, Carter, even sharper than I thought—but it will avail you nothing in this case."

"Wait and see," said Nick. "You may not know it all."

"Not all, perhaps, but enough to show me the way. I failed to fool you, but you also have failed to fool me. I see of what your scheme consisted, and bitter experience has taught me that you are a man to be feared. I am going to get rid of you."

"That, I think, would be a very wise move on your part, Currie," Nick pointedly advised.

"One cannot buck against you without growing wise," Currie retorted. "You have played your game, and, having lost, must pay the price. I have played mine, and though foiled in a measure, I have at least the stake for which I played—and I have the best of you."

"Well, then, you have scored two points, at least, if your word is worth anything," Nick bluntly allowed.

"Do you doubt it?" Currie swung round in his chair. "I'll soon show you whether it's worth anything. Bring the bauble out here, Lacy. Bring it out and let him see it for himself."

"You mean——" Lacy faltered, staring.

"You know what I mean," snapped Currie. "Let him see it. I want him to know, before we send him to the devil, that the stake for which we played is in my hands."

There was a threat in Currie's eyes no sane man would have ignored, and Jim Lacy no longer demurred. He darted out of the room, but was absent less than a minutes, and returned with a small parcel rolled in a strip of black cloth.

Currie seized it with feverish eagerness, and with a quick movement he spread the cloth open on the table.

Something glided out of one of its black folds. It seemed like a living creature. It writhed, uncoiled, and straightened out, as sinuous as if every joint was endowed with quivering nerves and pliant muscular fibers. It gleamed and glittered with a myriad of scintillating rays. It was dazzling in the lamplight—a long, lithe, radiant green jewel, designed to augment the beauty of a Hindu princess while coiling around her dusky neck and breast.

It was the missing Emerald Snake.

It was weird, resplendant, awe-inspiring in its beautiful repulsiveness, and the glitter of the diamond eyes gleaming in its oval head, twin sparks of living light, was as deadly as that in the eyes of a moccasin—or those of Mortimer Currie.

Nick Carter gazed at the jewel with a feeling of grim satisfaction, but he made no immediate comment. It served his purpose then to know it was where he could lay his hands on it, if, as he confidently believed, he yet would turn the table on these rascals.

Just how he was to accomplish it, however, did not then appear, though that it must be speedily done was only too apparent. For there again had risen to Currie's face the same terrible expression it had worn when he parted from Kate Lacy, the look of a man bent upon murder, and one so plainly reflected in the hangdog faces of his two confederates as to denote their entire approval of the desperate deed.

"Well, what do you say?" Currie demanded, with a sharper stare at the detective's flinty face.

"Say about what?" Nick asked coldly.

"This choice bauble and the fact that I now possess it."

"I have nothing to say about it, save that it typifies very nicely your own snaky nature."

"You lie!" Currie said sharply. "There's nothing snaky nor treacherous about me. I warned you in advance that I should turn just such a trick as this. Have you forgotten the letter I wrote you?"

"No."

"I thought not. I told you in that, Carter, that I would——"

"Oh, I remember all that you told me," Nick interrupted, with curt indifference. "Don't trouble yourself to repeat any of it."

"I choose to repeat some of it," snapped Currie insistently. "I'll make sure you remember it. I told you in that letter that I would break even with you for having put me to the bad. I told you I would, sooner or later, have your life for it. I'm going to make good, now. I'm going to wind up your career by——"

"You say you're going to Currie," Tommy Coyle suddenly cut in, after whispering earnestly to Lacy. "You'll end with throwing a shoe, I'm thinking, if you stick to that game of talk. You may not know all we're up against. If it's got to be done—do it, I say, and get out!"

Currie swung round in his chair and saw the scowling faces of his two confederates.

"You may be right," he snarled, as if struck, with the bare possibility that delay was dangerous. "We'll lose no time, then. Take out the panel. Open the chute."

"By Jove, I'm up against it, all right," thought Nick. "The rascals certainly mean business. I must find some way to circumvent them."

Racking his brain with that end in view, Nick frowningly watched the scoundrels, wondering of what their design consisted. He was not left long in doubt.

Both Coyle and Lacy were hastening to set aside a small stove that occupied one side of the room. In the wall back of it was a black board about three feet square, through which the funnel ran to connect with the chimney.

The removal of this board brought to light an old fireplace, long out of use, the walls of which were black with dirt and soot.

From the black wall, after working somewhat laboriously, the two rascals finally succeeded in removing a slab of stone more than two feet square, revealing the black mouth of what appeared to be a neatly constructed chute running downward at an angle of about forty-five degrees.

Where it ended, as well as the purpose for which it had been constructed, were only too obvious to Nick. For a gust of cold air, the swash and gurgle of water, and the salty odor of kelp and the river, had suddenly filled the dismal room.

Currie watched the knaves until the opening had been made, then turned again to the detective.

"See it?" he asked tersely, with a mirthless, malicious laugh. "Do you see it, Carter?"

"Yes, I see it," Nick said coldly.

"That's where you're going."

"I'll take your word for it."

"You'll do more, presently," sneered Currie. "It's built through an old culvert and runs into the river. It's a safe avenue for disposing of persons who stand in one's way."

"The design is obvious," said Nick. "You don't need to explain."

"I prefer to explain," Currie maliciously insisted. "I want you to know how easily we rid ourselves of you without the least danger of later detection. We bind you hand and foot with ropes treated with a chemical which causes them to rot and drop off soon after you reach the salt water. They leave no marks. Your body shows no signs of violence. An autopsy, when you finally are found, shows that you were living when you fell into the water, and that your death was due to drowning. You shall be found with your guns in your pockets, as well as all of your other belongings, and—well, I leave it to you, Carter. What will the verdict be?"

"Accidental drowning, Currie, in all probability," Nick said coolly. "You cover your tracks very nicely."

"Perfectly, Carter, would hit it nearer."

"Perfectly, then," Nick allowed. "And when is this trick to be turned?"

"Now!" snapped Currie sharply. "I warned you of it and now mean to make good. Bring the ropes, Coyle, and we'll finish the job at once."

CHAPTER X.

IN THE NICK OF TIME.

Chick Carter was not without an object in having restrained himself from arresting Mortimer Currie, despite the fate with which Nick was threatened at the hands of this rascal. He knew he was selecting the very course upon which, in view of all of the circumstances, Nick himself would have rigidly insisted.

For Chick had sized up almost instantly the conflicting contingencies of the general situation. He knew there was more to be accomplished than the mere arrest of Currie and Kate Lacy. Their confederates must be identified, cornered, and secured, and the stolen property must by some means be recovered; both of which ends might be hopelessly perverted by the immediate arrest of Currie and this woman.

Chick Carter kept quiet, therefore, and let the knave depart—but he had still other objects, other designs on which he felt sure he could safely depend.

"I'll nail this jade and force her to conduct me to the Rookery, wherever it may be," he said to himself, while he listened to Currie's receding steps. "I'll be on that rascal's track before he can accomplish too much, I'll wager."

Kate Lacy had turned to the window to watch Currie hurrying up the street, and Chick did not defer operations. He stole noiselessly out of the bedroom and through the narrow hall, and stepped unheard into the parlor. He paused for a moment, then said a bit curtly:

"Now, Miss Lacy, attend to me, if you please."

The woman swung round as if struck with a whip. Every vestige of color left her face, but she did not shrink nor cry out. She only stood and stared for a moment, as if unable to comprehend, and then asked sharply:

"Who are you? What are you doing here?"

"I have been listening to your interview with Mortimer Currie," Chick sternly answered. "I am a detective, one of Nick Carter's assistants."

"Oh, is that so?" Kate shrilly questioned, pulling herself together.

"Exactly. You are under arrest, Miss Lacy, and it's up to you to do what you're told."

"What am I under arrest for?"

"For complicity in the Fordham jewel robbery."

"But——"

"There aren't any buts," Chick declared, interrupting. "I heard all that passed between you and Currie. I know all about the crime, and that Nick Carter is likely to fall into the hands of your confederates in some place known as the Rookery. I propose to arrest them, recover the stolen property, and rescue Nick Carter. It's up to you to help me."

"And you are blockhead enough to think I'll do it?"

"I certainly think you will."

"Well, you've got another think coming," cried Kate defiantly. "I'm not the kind that squeals on a pal. If you're a detective, and I guess you are, all right, you've got me hands down. But that's all you've got, and you can bet on it."

"Come, come, don't be foolish," said Chick. "That's the worst course you can take. You can save yourself by——"

"Can, perhaps, but won't," snapped Kate, coolly seating herself in an easy-chair. "I've got no love for the like of you, Mr. Detective, and I'll not save myself by betraying a man I do like. That's straight goods and all there is to it."

"You'll change your mind, Miss Lacy."

"Not by a long chalk."

"Where has Currie gone?"

"I don't know."

"You know he has gone to a place called the Rookery, for you promised to join him there inside of an hour."

"Is that so?" Kate sneered. "Why did you ask, then, if you are so wise?"

"Only to give you a chance to partly square yourself. Where is this Rookery?"

"Down near the Battery," cried Kate, with a leer. "It's a cheap hotel, where——"

"Stop a bit!" Chick now said sharply. "You cannot blind, nor bluff me. I'm giving you a chance to be let down easy, but I see you're not inclined to take it. Once for all, Miss Lacy, are you going to tell me where the Rookery is located?"

"No, I'm not," snapped Kate promptly. "If you threaten me until doomsday you'll get nothing out of me."

Chick whipped out a pair of handcuffs.

"Very well," said he. "Slip your hands into these."

"Oh, I don't mind them," sneered the woman, while she obeyed. "I'm used to bangles."

"They're not all that's coming to you."

"Never you mind what's coming to me," Kate retorted. "I'll take my medicine without a whimper. I'll have one satisfaction, at least—that I gave you none the best of it."

Chick fastened the irons securely, but made no reply. He saw that the woman had all the makings of a thoroughbred crook, and that time would be wasted in an attempt to influence her.

As he turned from the chair in which she was seated, a bit disturbed with renewed apprehensions concerning Nick and how he might be assisted, Chick's gaze fell upon the padded coat and the disguise Currie had worn when masquerading as the humpback. On the instant his misgivings were dispelled, and a way suggested for overcoming the difficulty.

"By Jove, I have it," he said to himself. "The kid mentioned refers to Rita Denny. I'll tackle her in another way, by gracious, and one that will serve to fool her. Not only that, but I'll have Patsy to aid me. I'll hand her no tip to give him the slip."

Glancing around, Chick had discovered a telephone on a stand in one corner. Before venturing to use it, lest Kate Lacy might shout a warning and be heard over the wire, Chick turned back and bound a handkerchief tightly over the woman's mouth, and then tied her to her chair with cords cut from the window weights.

"Now, Miss Lacy, I'll show you how virtue overcomes vice," he remarked sternly.

Kate Lacy had submitted without a remonstrance, knowing it would be vain, but her looks spoke louder than words.

Chick now turned to the telephone and called up the Vandyke residence.

He raised the house butler, asked for Miss Denny, and within half a minute he recognized her voice over the wire.

Cleverly imitating that of Mortimer Currie, he asked a bit significantly:

"That you, kid?"

"Yes."

The answer and a slight change in the girl's tone not only convinced him that his ruse was successful, but also that she was at once somewhat alarmed.

"I'm Mortie," said Chick. "Understand?"

"Sure."

"Do what I tell you."

"I will."

"Slip out of there at once and come to Kate's house," Chick directed. "Do not let anything detain you. Get here as quickly as you can."

"Are you with her now?"

"Yes. I'm phoning from her rooms."

"I'll come there at once, Mortie."

"One word more, kid. I'll be waiting for you on Kate's steps. She's gone to the Rookery with Tommy."

"I'll be there in half an hour."

"Good enough."

There was a look of grim satisfaction on Chick's face when he hung up the receiver—and on that of Kate Lacy an expression to which language could not do justice. She now saw only too plainly how the detective was about to accomplish his object.

Chick proceeded without a word to make his preparations. He now was sure that Rita Denny knew where the Rookery was located, and he already had decided how he could fool her into conducting him there.

Having made sure that Kate could not escape from the chair in which he was going to leave her for a time, Chick clad himself very carefully in the disguise left there by Currie, that of the humpback. One glance into the mirror convinced him that the ruse would not be detected in the darkness of the evening.

Calling up the local police station, Chick made himself known to the officer in charge, and then gave him a few instructions.

Twenty minutes later, crouching on the steps of Kate Lacy's dwelling, Chick was joined by the girl he was expecting, Rita Denny. She was clad in a black cloak, and looked pale and apprehensive, but she evinced no surprise upon seeing Currie, as she supposed, in disguise, though she asked quickly:

"What are you in that rig for, Mortie? What's happened?"

"I'll explain later, kid," Chick replied, pretending to be in some haste and holding a handkerchief to one of his eyes. "Tommy, Jim, and Kate are at the Rookery. We want to talk things over and may decide to whack up the stuff. I've got a speck of dust in one of my eyes, hang it, and can't see well. Take my arm and steer me, so I'll not slip. It's not easy walking in this rig."

"I shouldn't think it would be," said Rita.

"We'll head for the Rookery at once."

"Come on. I'll guide you, Mortie."

"Good enough, kid. Move lively."

She laughed again and took Chick's arm.

"As crafty a jade as the other," he said to himself, as they moved away together. "But I'm fooling her, all right, and the rest should be easy."

A figure on the opposite side of the street presently caught his eye—that of Patsy Garvan.

Passing under a corner light half a minute later, Chick managed to stealthily signal him—and received a signal in reply.

The game was closing in.

Ten minutes brought the couple to the door of the miserable place in which Nick Carter was nearing the end of his interview with Mortimer Currie.

Rita Denny stopped at the low steps and asked unsuspectingly:

"Got your key, Mortie? Shall I open the door?"

Chick straightened up, caught her around the waist, and clapped one hand over her mouth.

"No," he whispered sternly. "You keep quiet, instead. I am a detective, and you are under arrest."

"Want any help?"

The question came from Patsy, already at Chick's elbow.

Other figures were darting nearer in the darkness—those of three policemen in plain clothes, who had shadowed Chick from Kate Lacy's door.

It was child's play to grapple with the situation from that moment.

One of the policemen took charge of the girl and led her away.

Chick stationed the other two at the front door, which he quietly opened with a picklock.

"Wait here, boys, till we find out what's doing," he whispered. "Nail any one who attempts to come out. We'll tackle the back way, Patsy."

"I'm with you," Patsy muttered, with eyes shining.

Five minutes later they had found their way into the rear yard, where they could see only the closed door and the lighted window of the kitchen, the curtain of which was drawn.

They had arrived, however, in the nick of time.

By a trick in which he was an expert, and just as Coyle and Lacy, responding to Currie's commands, were approaching with ropes to bind him, Nick had at that very moment wrenched himself free from his handcuffs and had kicked over the kitchen table, sending Currie with it headlong to the floor.

In another instant he was in a hand-to-hand fight with the three rascals, and the crash and cries that arose were easily heard outside.

"Into the house!" Chick yelled instantly. "Through the window, Patsy!"

"Out goes the window!" Patsy shouted, drawing his revolver.

It went in rather than out, in fact, but all in the hundredth part of a second.

Through it bounded both detectives, and at the same moment came the crash of the policemen's feet on the entry stairs.

In far less time than is taken to tell it, the dismal room was filled with men, three of whom were cursing and struggling, but only vainly trying to avoid the irons that were speedily snapped around their wrists.

Nick Carter had picked up a glistening, sinuous object from the floor, preserving it from injury, and he held it up in the lamp light when the last of the three crooks had been secured.

"There you are, boys!" he exclaimed, addressing the staring policemen. "The famous Emerald Snake, stolen last night in Fordham, not by an ape, but by this foolish fellow and four willing assistants. I suppose you have the women, Chick."

"You bet we've got them, Nick," Chick promptly declared.

"Good work, then, for all hands," Nick cried. "That's all there is to it."

So, in fact, it proved to be.

Within half an hour Currie and his four confederates were safely lodged in the station house, the first step toward the punishment they deserved. Their trial came a little later, but the evidence against them was conclusive, and all were sent to Sing Sing for long terms.

The Emerald Snake was returned to Mrs. Sturtevant on the day following the arrest, and was received by her with expressions of gratitude that need no record here. That was not all, however, for the bank accounts of Nick Carter and has assistants were materially swelled by her generous payment for their splendid work.

THE END.

"The Currie Outfit; or, Nick Carter's Needle Clew," is the title of the story that will appear in the next issue of this weekly. Again Nick Carter and his assistants are called upon to match their wit and brawn against that of Mortimer Currie and his desperate band of criminals. As the title implies, a needle proves to be an important clew for Nick Carter to work on; but it is the sagacity of the great detective in noting the position in which the needle is found that makes the clew a valuable one. The issue is No. 9, and it will be out November 9th.

CORNERED BY INCHES;

Or, A Curious Robbery in High Life.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Francis Grosman discovers that half the jewels have been removed from a valuable necklace belonging to his wife, and jewels of an inferior grade substituted. He tells no one of the loss except Inspectors Watts and Keene. They tell him to have other pieces of jewelry examined and report if any substitution has been made.

CHAPTER III.

A DIAMOND CROSS.

"He seems quite void of any suspicion that one of his own family might be guilty of this crime," dryly observed Chief Inspector Watts, rising to watch from his window the carriage of Mr. Francis Grosman, as it crossed Pemberton Square through the falling snow. "Possibly the disclosure of a similar case would have startled him, had I thought it wise to have opened his eyes."

"Then the case has a parallel, chief?" inquired Sheridan Keene, looking up from the block upon which he had made various memoranda.

"Oh, yes, several!" nodded Chief Watts, whose fund of information covers most of the crimes in the category. "There was a case of one Gordon Fiske, out in the city of Denver, who adopted a similar scheme to get money with which to cover peculations from his father, in whose silk house he was employed."

"I recall it, now that you mention it."

"Then there was a case in England, although the matter was hushed up at the time; and, in fact, never was disclosed outside the circle of Scotland Yard. I got it from one of the Bow Street runners. It was the affair of Lady Laura Radcliff, who took precisely this method of jewel substitution, and ultimately ruined her entire collection, in order to satisfy the demands of a gentlemanly scoundrel with whom she had become clandestinely associated in a way that might not have been pleasing to her husband had he learned the whole truth. Lady Laura slipped out of the net nicely, however, and managed to hoodwink his lordship."

Sheridan Keene laughed softly, and the chief quickly added:

"But I wouldn't as yet carry the analogy to a definite suspicion of any of the Grosman family. We will await his further report. Meantime, you had better take the case, and see first what you can learn at the safety-deposit office."

"I will begin an investigation immediately," said Detective Keene, rising.

"Also see Kenney, the jeweler, and make sure that he discloses nothing."

"I will, sir! And wouldn't it be well to learn if Mrs. Grosman or her son, both of whom have the combination of the house safe, have lately been to Kenney with any inquiries?"

"Yes—a good idea! And warn him specially against disclosing to either of them anything pertaining to the robbery, should they call hereafter."

"I will do so."

"If you run upon anything of consequence, report it to me. Also make it a point to be present when Grosman calls here Wednesday morning."

"I will be here, chief, without fail."

And Sheridan Keene bowed, taking his hat, and presently withdrew to the general office, while Chief Inspector Watts, once having given the investigation in charge of the former, in whose sagacity he had an abiding faith, instantly dropped the matter entirely from his mind.

The report returned by Detective Keene on the following Wednesday morning, prior to the arrival of Mr. Grosman, served chiefly to narrow the circle of reasonable suspicion.

Careful inquiry at the office of the safety-deposit vaults had revealed that illicit access could not possibly have been had to the property of Mr. Grosman without the irregularity being detected; and, further, that only Grosman himself had twice applied there for the purpose since the previous March, these visits fixing the precise dates of the deposit and removal of the jewels.

An interview with Eldridge Kenney, whose integrity in such a matter was considered reliable, had established the fact that he personally examined Mrs. Grosman's jewelry in March; that none of his employees had so much as seen it, hence could have had no part in the fraud; and that Mr. Grosman personally had carried the property away, with the expressed intention of immediately placing it in his drawer in the safety deposit.

Hence, if Grosman had told the truth, it became reasonably safe to assume that this crafty robbery had been accomplished since the removal of the jewelry to Grosman's residence on the twenty-third day of September.

"I think it is there we must look for the criminal," concluded Chief Inspector Watts, while he sat with Sheridan Keene, awaiting Grosman's arrival. "We will make a beginning there, at all events."

"How about the removal of the original stones, chief, and the setting of the substitutes?" Keene suggested. "Is it not probable that that work was done outside?"

"In that case, some outside party is involved, though the work possibly may have been done by some inmate of the house. That remains to be discovered. The entire investigation is a decidedly delicate piece of work, and the field of possible suspects is wide; but I have formed a plan by which I think you may ultimately drive the game from cover. I am glad you happen to have no other case on hand, Detective Keene, for you are the very man for the work."

An inquiry as to the chief's plan rose to the lips of the young detective, but it was never uttered; for at that moment the man for whom they were waiting came hurrying into the office, without the ceremony even of announcing himself by a knock upon the door.

That Mr. Francis Grosman was even more nervous and excited than on his previous visit was immediately apparent. His delicate features were quite sallow, his eyes dilated, his tall figure tremulous and unsteady. He bore clasped in his arms, as if hurriedly gathered up from the seat of his carriage, no less than seven plush or velvet jewel cases, of various shapes and sizes, making a burden which this punctilious gentleman, if in an ordinary state of mind, would not for a moment have thought of assuming.

"Dear me, gentlemen, I'm so glad I find you!" he at once exclaimed. "The half has not been told! I'm robbed of more than——"

"One moment, Mr. Grosman!" interrupted Chief Inspector Watts, with considerable sternness, though young Sheridan Keene felt very much inclined to laugh outright at the ludicrous distress of this man of years and wealth over so commonplace a matter.

"This excitement of yours is inexcusable, Mr. Grosman!" the chief bluntly added. "You act like a man robbed of all his possessions. The loss of a few thousand dollars' worth of diamonds is not a matter for you to lose your head over. This perturbation of yours will not help matters; quite the contrary; and as you are said to be worth a million or two, you should meet such a loss with at least reasonable composure."

"Good heavens, sir, it's not the loss!" Mr. Grosman impulsively replied, with no apparent resentment of the chief's reproof. "It is not the loss, I assure you; it is rather the shocking fact that I have been made the victim of such an outrage, and the bare possibility that the criminal might at this moment be one of my own household! That's what distresses me, sir! Not the mere loss, I assure you."

"Well, sir, kindly sit down and compose yourself," replied Chief Watts, drawing a chair for his caller. "I'll relieve you of those boxes; there is room on my desk. If the criminal is, indeed, one of your household, we shall certainly run him down. But I wish you to entirely drop the affair, as a personal matter, and leave the investigation to us alone. Any self-betrayal on your part may ruin all our efforts."

"I will be very careful hereafter, sir; I will confess I have been greatly distressed."

"Now, what have you to report, and why have you brought these jewel cases down here?" asked the chief, when Grosman more composedly took the chair offered him.

"I have just come from Mr. Kenney's, sir," Grosman hastened to explain. "These cases contain other pieces of my wife's jewelry. Mr. Kenney has just examined them, and states that, with but one exception, every piece has been treated in the same way as the necklace. Furthermore, that not less than fifteen thousand dollars is involved in the outrage."

"Did your wife take any of these pieces abroad with her last summer?" demanded Chief Watts.

"Yes, sir, several."

"Well, that is nothing! It establishes the fact that this robbery has been committed since your return, as it involves also the pieces left at home."

"I will show you these several pieces, sir, if you wish to see them," said Mr. Grosman.

And Chief Watts suffered him to open, with tremulous hands, the various cases, and display upon his desk a collection of ornaments one might well have envied him of possession, even in their present condition.

It comprised a large brooch, in the rather mocking

form of a horseshoe; two bar lace pins; a valuable chatelaine; a pendant cross, fully two inches in length, together with several small ornaments of less value.

"With the exception of this"—and Mr. Grosman removed the cross from its velvet receptacle—"each of these jewels has had one or more original stones replaced by one of materially less value. I cannot understand why this, even, has been spared, for it contains no less than eleven diamonds, all of considerable value."

A curious expression came and went from the face of Sheridan Keene; but he merely glanced at the blazing ornament, and volunteered no remark.

"Has it been as easily available as the others to the person guilty of this theft?" asked Chief Inspector Watts.

"Yes, Mr. Inspector," was the reply; "the case has been with the necklace about all the time."

"At the safety deposit?"

"Yes, sir."

"And in your safe at home?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do all these pieces belong to your wife?"

"All but one of the bar pins, which is the property of my daughter."

"We will close the cases again, Mr. Grosman. You are sure that their temporary removal from your house will not be discovered?"

"Quite so, sir. I brought them away less than an hour ago."

"I wish you to return them immediately after leaving here, and to rigidly adhere to my previous instructions," Chief Watts now commanded. "Have you observed any indication of suspicion or uneasiness on the part of any of your household, as if from apprehension that this theft may possibly have been discovered?"

"None whatever, sir."

"What is your coachman's name?"

"Joseph Holly, sir; he is English."

"Note the name, Inspector Keene."

"I have it, chief."

"How long has this man Holly been in your employ, Mr. Grosman?"

"Nearly five years; he is a model servant."

"Give me your butler's name?"

"James Vincent."

"That of your valet?"

"John Deverge."

"French?"

"Yes, sir; I brought him from Paris."

"Your wife's maid?"

"Louise Fenster."

"That of your chef?"

"John Paul."

"And the chambermaid?"

"Mary Dalton."

"Except the coachman, Holly, these servants are comparatively new ones, are they?"

"Yes, sir. I have had them in my employ only since my return from Europe."

"Give general satisfaction?"

"Yes, sir. If not, I should have discharged them."

"Mr. Grosman," and the chief swung a little nearer; "have you ever employed a secretary?"

"On one or two occasions I have, when my business or correspondence required it."

"Do you have an office downtown?"

"Oh, no, sir! I have no regular business."

"Then your private secretary has always been an inmate of your house, I take it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Under the circumstances, that is fortunate!" exclaimed the chief. "Now listen to me carefully, Mr. Grosman."

"I will, sir."

"I want you to insert in the evening papers of to-day a want advertisement for a private secretary. Prepare the way for this, and for his advent into your house, by casually remarking at home upon some business which you contemplate undertaking."

"I understand, sir."

"To-morrow, in response to your advertisement, Inspector Keene will call upon you, and you will employ him in the capacity mentioned. He will thus install himself in your house, and you, sir, without the slightest deviation from the instructions I have given you, will then leave the entire investigation of this affair to him. You are quite sure you can follow these directions to the letter, are you?"

"Why, certainly I am, sir!" exclaimed Grosman, evidently with an immediate interest in, and comprehension of, the plan proposed. "You may safely depend upon me to this extent at least, Chief Inspector Watts."

"So I do depend upon you," Chief Watts rejoined shortly. "And you, in turn, may rely upon Detective Keene to get at the bottom of this affair, if any man can accomplish it. After his advent into your house, moreover, you will be guided by his instructions—remember that!"

"I will, sir, surely."

"That is all this morning," bowed the chief approvingly. "Take these gems home and replace them as usual, and expect Detective Keene at your home at a seasonable hour to-morrow morning. Receive him as a stranger, not as an acquaintance. Good day, sir."

CHAPTER IV.

THE GAME BREAKS COVER.

It was not without some misgivings that Sheridan Keene entered upon the detective work assigned him. He fully realized its delicate character, if the perpetrator of the crime was indeed an inmate of the Grosman residence, and that any pronounced innovation there might tend to alarm the criminal. Hence, ostensibly it was a very unassuming young man who presented himself in response to the prearranged advertisement, and was ultimately employed as a private secretary by Mr. Francis Grosman.

But the advent of a new servant into the well-regulated household of Mrs. Grosman did not appear to create even a ripple of disturbance; and for four days and nights, or over the following Sunday, the artful watchfulness of Sheridan Keene was unrewarded.

It enabled him to measure the inmates of the house, however, which also was not at all encouraging. Mrs. Grosman was a woman of forty, nearly twelve years younger than her husband, and a lady of culture, beauty, and womanly dignity. Her daughter was a girl of eighteen, rather a spoiled miss, yet pretty, and, for the most part, pleasing. The son went daily to college in Cambridge, and was a manly youth, and the last person in the world to have been suspected of a crime. Indeed,

the last might have applied to the entire Grosman family, Detective Keene was fairly compelled to decide.

Nor in the servants' quarters were his observations a whit more promising.

The coachman, Holly, was an Englishman of fifty, with a face as honest as that on a government coin, and an interest confined solely to horseflesh.

Deverge, the valet, was a French youth of exceedingly good manners, who talked in pidgin English, when he talked at all, which was seldom, and who appeared like anything but a criminal. Sheridan Keene soon discovered that he had been in America but about three months, and for the first time, and soon disregarded him entirely.

The cook, John Paul, was a stout, phlegmatic man, inclined to be very lazy, and who never showed his face outside of the kitchen except to seek his bed or his beer, which latter he favored in a modest way on the sly.

Of the women, of whom there were but two, Mary Dalton was a woman from the provinces, well into middle life, and whose duties were of rather a general character, from the basement to the roof. She, too, was soon sifted out of the circle of general suspicion.

Louise Fenster, Mrs. Grosman's maid, and the only remaining servant, was a pretty brunette of twenty-two or thereabouts, of whom her mistress appeared noticeably fond. In fact, she was remarkably pretty, with features of classical regularity, with a rich complexion, and warm, dark eyes, and a graceful and well-modeled figure, from her rounded arms and plump hands down to her dainty feet and ankles.

Mrs. Grosman evidently found her companionable, and fancied her for her beauty, openly displaying for her a fondness which the girl seemed to appreciate and strive to merit. Indeed, on Sunday morning, when Detective Keene saw this girl leave the house with her prayer book reverently clasped in her pretty hand, and her eyes modestly lowered when she passed him in the sumptuous hall, the secretary quickly decided that she was by long odds the most attractive being of the entire house.

Yet for four days, in so far as making any discovery pertinent to the robbery, the observation of Sheridan Keene, at times when he was not for appearance sake engaged with Mr. Grosman, were absolutely without results.

But on Monday the game seemed to break cover.

There occurred an incident upon which he seized as a clew.

Dusk was falling outside, and Deverge was lighting the lamps in the front hall. From his desk in a small room opposite the large double chambers occupied by the heads of the house, Detective Keene heard the Frenchman strike a match; and almost at the same time he heard also the rustle of skirts, and the fall of hurrying feet toward the main stairs.

Quickly rising, he cautiously glanced out and saw Mrs. Grosman hasten down the front stairs, her manner indicating serious excitement. Making sure that he was not observed, he stole to the balustrade and looked over.

At that moment the mail slot in the front door closed with a snap, and three or four letters fell to the hall floor. Upon these Mrs. Grosman pounced with startling avidity, and quickly selected one, the superscription upon which evidently met her gaze. She thrust it into her pocket, then turned and gave the others to the valet.

"Hand these to Mr. Grosman, Jean. He is in the library," she commanded quietly, with a flash of her eyes in the direction of the room indicated, as if she were anxious to feel certain of having escaped observation. "Say those were all."

"Yes, madam," bowed Deverge.

Then Mrs. Grosman hastened to her room again, while Sheridan Keene slipped into his own; and presently the detective heard her forcibly tear open the cover of the communication received.

"So, so! She has been watching for the carrier," he decided. "She is up to something unbeknown to her husband. I will follow where the thread leads me."

His room, allotted him at his own suggestion, was on the same floor as those occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Grosman. Off that of the latter was a small one occupied by Mrs. Grosman's maid. The valet had a room back of the detective. The parlors, dining room, and a fine library were on the floor below.

Though Mrs. Grosman had at first opposed it, her husband had insisted that his private secretary should take his meals with the family, rather than be compelled to associate with the lower servants. This naturally was one of the provisions of Detective Keene.

The latter had an eye for Mrs. Grosman when she came down to dinner that Monday evening. Though she carried herself about as usual, her face was observably pale, and her occasional taciturnity indicated a rather serious train of thought. Yet she was a woman of much beauty and refinement, and was not easily to be suspected of deliberate evil.

But Sheridan Keene was a man who worked upon facts.

"Detain your wife and children in the drawing-room for a time," he said, aside, to Grosman, immediately after dinner. "Invent some story, if necessary, and make sure of holding them for a quarter hour or more."

"But what's that for?" irritably demanded Grosman, who was not greatly pleased as yet with the success of the detective's efforts.

"Don't ask me what it's for," Keene returned curtly. "Do what I bid you."

And, without awaiting a reply, and disregarding Grosman's frown, he hastened upstairs to his room.

As the servants dined after the family, and the latter were to be detained below, Detective Keene felt insured of the opportunity for which he had planned—that of getting at the interior of Mrs. Grosman's private desk, which occupied a corner of her chamber.

Leaving his own room, he crossed the hall and entered that of Mr. Grosman, where he extinguished a dim light left by the valet.

"I will at least have an avenue of retreat, if needed," he mentally declared.

This room adjoined that of Mrs. Grosman, in which a bright light had been left.

"It saves me the trouble. Evidently she meant to return soon after dinner," thought Detective Keene, with a curious smile on his resolute face.

Entering Mrs. Grosman's room from that of her husband, the detective quickly approached her desk and tried the closed cover. Both were securely locked, and the keys removed.

"She's taking no chances, eh?"

Feeling in his pocket for his own keys, he was about to drop to his knee at the desk, when, from the direction of the hall, the door to which was opened, there sounded

a step as light as that of a cat, and just the faintest rustle of moving skirts—a sound that would have failed to reach any ears less alert and sharp than those of Sheridan Keene.

His face hardened instantly. Moving rapidly, yet silently, he slipped back through Grosman's room and into the hall. It was illumined only by the light in the hall below, and by that in Mrs. Grosman's chamber, yet objects were clearly discernible.

Standing motionless near the open door of her mistress' chamber was Mrs. Grosman's pretty maid.

With a quick smile, whatever he may have felt, Detective Keene immediately approached her, saying affably:

"Hello, Miss Louise! You haven't seen anything of a small package of papers tied with a red string, have you?"

The girl flashed a quick glance at him from her lustrous eyes, half smiling, half quizzical; then, with a captivating laugh, displayed her pretty teeth.

"No, I haven't, Mr. Greene," she replied glibly, calling him by the name he had assumed. "Have you lost it?"

"I have mislaid it, or else Mr. Grosman took it away. I thought perhaps he had laid it down in his room, or his wife's. I have been in there for it."

"Yes, I heard you in there," smiled the girl, from under her drooping lids. "I wondered what you were doing!"

Her lowered voice carried a significance which Detective Keene decided to meet halfway. He drew nearer to her, saying softly, as if with some misgivings:

"You don't think I did wrong in going in there, do you?"

"Well, I can't say you did just right."

"Do you think Mrs. Grosman will find fault?"

"She would if she knew it."

"And perhaps you mean to tell her, Louise?"

"Do you think I do?" the girl laughed, with an arch, upward glance at Keene's face.

"I'd rather have you say: 'I will not tell her!'" he muttered pointedly, slipping his hand around hers. "What do you say, Louise?"

"What you would have me say—if you promise not to disclose it," she answered, with a curious light in her lifted eyes. "I'll agree not to tell her, if you don't."

"I'll give you my word I will not."

"I'll give you mine, then! I will say nothing about it."

"Say, Louise, you are a good——"

But she interrupted him with a soft, tantalizing laugh, slipping with a lithe movement from the arms which Keene would have placed around her; and, flashing a backward glance at him, half inviting, half taunting, she made for the near stairway.

Mrs. Francis Grosman was just ascending from the hall below.

TO BE CONTINUED.

DINING IN "CHAPS."

A "cowboy dinner" is one of the latest exuberances of New York society. Clad in the sombreros, red neckerchiefs, flannel shirts, and fringed "chaps" of the cowboy—or cowgirl—or in the blankets and feathers of the real Indian, two dozen of the younger set at Tuxedo Park feasted in a log cabin, built in the great ballroom adjoining the club. The cabin was lighted only by candles set in bottles around the walls. Hanging from the eaves and piled against the cabin outside was artificial snow, while a cluster of cedars hid a band of colored singers, who furnished the entertainment. The table was of rough boards, without covering, and the seats were wooden benches. All courses were served on tin dishes.

A SNOWBALL FIGHT, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

By HORATIO ALGER, JUNIOR.

The snow had fallen to the depth of six inches during the night, filling in the yards, and covering the doorsteps throughout the town of Conway. Among those who hailed the arrival of the snow with joy was Frank Taylor, a boy of fourteen, the son of the Widow Taylor, who lived in a miserable little tenement not far from the mill. Why he was glad to see the snow will soon appear.

Early in the morning he shoveled a path to the street, and then, putting his shovel over his shoulder, said to his mother:

"I'm going over to Squire Ashmead's to see if he doesn't want me to shovel paths in his yard."

"He's got a boy of his own," said Mrs. Taylor; "perhaps he will do it."

Frank laughed.

"Sam Ashmead is proud and lazy," he said. "You won't catch him shoveling paths. I think I shall get the job. I want to earn something so that you need not sit all day sewing. It is too hard for you."

"I ought to think myself lucky to get employment at all," said the widow.

"I wish I could get steady work somewhere," said Frank; "but I've tried and tried, and it seems impossible."

"Willing hands will not want work long," said his mother.

"I hope not, mother. But I must be going, or somebody will get the start of me."

While Frank is on his way to Squire Ashmead's, a few words of explanation may be given. His mother had been a widow for two years. Her husband had been a man of some education, having at times taught school, but he had never succeeded in laying up any money, and his widow was left almost penniless. Frank, who was a stout boy, and a good boy as well, had earned something by doing odd jobs, but had failed to obtain permanent employment. The burden of their joint support, therefore, was thrown upon his mother, who was very industrious with her needle, but was compelled to labor beyond her strength. All this troubled Frank, who felt that, as a stout, strong boy, he ought to bear at least half the expense.

In due time he reached Squire Ashmead's, and was glad to see that the snow remained undisturbed.

He rang the bell, and asked if he might shovel the paths that were necessary.

Squire Ashmead was absent in New York, to which city he had gone the morning previous on business, but his wife agreed to employ Frank.

He went to work with a will, and soon had a path dug from the front door to the gate. A path was also required from the back door to the stable, which was situated in the rear of the house. This was quite a distance, and, as Frank wished to do the work thoroughly, it required considerable time.

He was about half through this portion of his task when a snowball whistled by his ear.

Looking round quickly, he saw Sam Ashmead standing at the corner of the house, engaged in making a fresh snowball.

"Don't fire any more snowballs, Sam Ashmead," said Frank.

"I shall, if I please," said Sam.

"I haven't time to fire back now," said Frank. "Wait till I get through, and we'll have a match, if you like."

"But I don't like," said Sam scornfully. "Do you think I would have a match with a beggar like you?"

"I am no beggar, Sam Ashmead," said Frank, "and if I were I don't think I would beg of you."

"Oh, you're mighty proud," sneered Sam, "considering that you live in an old hut not half as good as our stable."

"Yes, I am poor, and I live in a poor house," said Frank calmly, "but that isn't a crime that I know of. Some time I shall live in a better house, I hope."

So saying, he went back to work, and began shoveling the snow vigorously. He did not anticipate any further attack from Sam, but in this he soon found himself mistaken.

In the course of a minute he felt a pretty hard blow in the center of his back, and looking round saw Sam Ashmead laughing insolently.

"How does that feel?" asked Sam.

"That's the second snowball you've fired at me," said Frank quietly, but there was a light in his eye as he spoke. "I advise you not to fire another if you know what is good for yourself."

"So you threaten me, do you? Suppose I fire again, what's going to happen?" demanded Sam, with an unpleasant sneer.

"I think you will be sorry for it," said Frank.

Sam hesitated a moment, but only a moment. He was a year older than Frank, and larger in size. Certainly he ought to be a match for him. But he did not believe that Frank would have the audacity to touch him, the son of Squire Ashmead, the richest man in the village. He therefore deliberately made another snowball, and firing it, struck Frank in the back of his head.

Frank no sooner felt the blow than he threw down his shovel, and ran toward his assailant.

"Keep off, you beggar!" said Sam.

"It's too late," said Frank. "I warned you not to fire again."

Sam placed himself in an attitude of defense, but found himself seized violently round the middle, and before he fairly knew what was going to happen, he was lying in a snow bank with Frank standing over him.

He struggled to his feet, mad with rage, and "pitched into" Frank, as the boys express it, and endeavored to retaliate in kind. But Frank was watchful and wary, and, evading the attack, seized him again when his strength was half spent, and Sam found himself once more occupying an involuntary bed in the snow.

A third struggle resulted in the same way. Sam was furious, but he saw that Frank was more than a match for him.

Just then a servant called out from the door.

"Master Sam, your mother says it's time for you to be going to school."

To tell the truth Sam was rather glad of the summons, as it gave him an excuse for retiring from the contest.

"I'll be even with you yet," he said, shaking his fist at Frank. "I'll let my father know how you insulted me, you young beggar!"

"If anybody has been insulted, I have," said Frank. "You must remember that you began it."

Sam scowled vindictively, and, brushing the snow from his coat, went into the house. Before Frank finished the path at the back of the house he was gone to school.

Mrs. Ashmead sent out fifty cents to Frank for his morning's work, with which he went home, well satisfied, wishing that he might earn as much every day. He wondered a little whether Sam would tell his father what had occurred between them. He did not speak of it to his mother, for she was nervous, and would be troubled by it, as she received considerable work to do from the Ashmead family which she might fear would be taken away.

On the afternoon of the next day, however, Frank received a note, which proved to come from Squire Ashmead. It ran as follows:

"FRANK TAYLOR: Please call at my office to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. JAMES ASHMEAD."

This note Frank thought best to show to his mother.

"What does it mean, Frank? Have you any idea?" she asked.

Frank thereupon told her the story of his difficulty with Sam.

"It may be about that," he said.

"Oh, dear," said the widow. "I'm afraid he's very angry. I hope you will apologize, Frank."

"No, mother," said Frank, "I don't see why I should. I only defended myself from a bully. I should be ashamed to do anything else. I didn't hurt him, and didn't intend to, but I wanted to teach him that he couldn't insult me without having to pay for it."

"I am afraid some harm will come of it," said the widow anxiously.

"Don't trouble yourself, mother," said Frank soothingly. "If we do only what's right, God will take care of us."

Still it was with some anxiety that Frank made his way the next morning to the office of Squire Ashmead. This gentleman was the agent of a large manufactory in the town, of which also he was a considerable owner, so that he received an income of over ten thousand dollars a year, which made him the most prominent and influential citizen in the town.

When Frank entered the office, Squire Ashmead was conversing with a stranger on business.

"Sit down," he said, turning to Frank. "I will be at leisure in a moment."

"Well," he said, after the stranger had departed, "Sam tells me you and he have had a little difficulty."

"Yes, sir," said Frank. "I would like to explain how it occurred."

"Very well. Go on."

It will be unnecessary to give the explanation, as it was strictly in accordance with the facts.

"Do you blame me for what I did?" asked Frank, at the end.

"No, I do not," said the squire. "Sam acted like a bully, and was properly punished. Let that pass. Now

let me ask you how you and your mother are getting along?"

"Poorly, sir," said Frank. "If I could have steady work, it would be different, but that I cannot get. It troubles me to see my mother work so hard all day. I think it is too much for her."

"How would you like to come into my office?"

Frank's eyes sparkled.

"I should think myself very lucky, sir, to get so good a chance."

"I want some boy whom I can trust, who can grow up to the business, and after a time relieve me of a portion of my cares. I would take Sam, but I am sorry to say, though he is my own son, that he would not answer my purpose. I have heard good accounts of you from your teacher and the people in the village. I will take you at a salary of six dollars a week, to be increased from time to time if you will suit me. Can you come Monday morning?"

"Yes, sir," said Frank, "and I will do my best to give you satisfaction."

"Very well, my lad. Good morning."

Frank left the office, feeling as if his fortune was made. His mother, who was awaiting the result of the interview anxiously at home, was overwhelmed with astonishment at the unexpected good fortune of her son. Sam was disagreeably surprised, and tried to shake his father's resolution, but Squire Ashmead was a sensible man, and not to be moved.

Frank commenced his duties the next Monday. He was so faithful that he was rapidly advanced, and at twenty-one was receiving twelve hundred dollars a year. At twenty-five, on the sudden death of Squire Ashmead, he succeeded to his agency, and now lives with his mother in the mansion at which he once thought himself lucky to be permitted to shovel the paths. As for Sam, he squandered the handsome property received from his father, and died at thirty from the effects of intemperate habits.

A POETIC DIFFICULTY.

By MAX ADELER.

Mr. Markley was engaged some time ago in writing a poem, and in the course of the work he got stuck upon a verse, and it occurred to him to call upon Reverend Doctor Potts to ask for assistance. When the doctor came down to the parlor, Markley said:

"Doctor, I called to see you confidentially about a matter that has been troubling me, and I want to get some advice."

"Very proper, very proper," said the doctor. "I am always glad to find a young man turning his thoughts to serious things. Now just tell me what your experience has been, and then I will give you a couple of good books to read so as to prepare you before you make formal application for admission to the church."

"I think you misunderstand me," said Markley. "The trouble to which I refer is not exactly of that nature. I——"

"I see," said the doctor, "you have committed some crime; you are a prey to remorse. You want to unbosom yourself to me. Go on, sir, go on! Tell me the whole melancholy story. Nothing can be better than for a criminal to confess before he makes restitution. Have you embezzled money, or have you——"

"Oh, not at all! The fact is that I am writing a poem, and I have got to a place where I must find a good work to rhyme with 'loosed,' and I can't. It bothers me like the mischief."

"Oh, that is it! Well, now, what is the situation? What are the facts of the case?"

"Well, you see, there is a girl who has been captured by the Indians. Her lover, who is the hero of the story, pursues the savages. At last he overtakes them; and, after driving them off, he finds that girl tied to a tree. They were going to kill her, you know. Well, now, my point is that he unloosed her, and tried to get her out of the way before the Indians returned, but I can't get the right word to rhyme to 'loosed'."

"It seems hard that you should suffer when there are so many words in the dictionary. H'm-m, lemme see; how would 'boost' do? Would it do for the lover to boost that girl up that tree?

"When once he had unloosed her,
Up the tree he tried to boost her;

"How's that?"

"It hardly is the thing," said Markley. "The rhyme is good, but the idea of the lover boosting his darling up a maple tree is not sufficiently affecting; there is not enough poetry in it."

"Perhaps not," said the doctor. "Well, then, what do you say to 'roost'? 'Roost' is a good rhyme.

"When the maiden was unloosed,
She went up the tree to roost.

"Something like that, you know."

"I thought of 'roost,'" replied Markley, "but upon the whole, I think I'd rather not send the girl up that tree, and as she is out in the midst of a trackless wilderness there's actually no other place anywhere about for her to roost. Can't manage it anyway you fix it."

"No? Well, let's see, loosed—loosed—loosed—noosed; how about 'noosed?' You might make the lover chase the Indians with a lasso, and catch one in the noose.

"When his darling was unloosed,
A savage brave he noosed.

"Now, that seems to me to be first-rate."

"Don't strike me," said Markley. "The way I've got it he has nothing with him but a double-barreled gun, and he couldn't lasso an Indian with that, now could he? And anyhow he is a salesman in a bonnet store in New York, and those people hardly ever know how to throw the lasso, anyway."

"Well, what do you say to 'used'? You might put it:

"She was glad to be unloosed,
For to it she was not used;

"Or suppose you take 'amused,' for instance, and say:

"At his efforts to get her unloosed
She was very greatly amused.

"And then you might use the word 'refused,' and fix it somehow this way:

"After he got her completely unloosed
He wanted to kiss her, but she refused.

"Or:

"To kiss him she couldn't be induced.

"Now that might answer."

"I'm afraid not," said Markley. "Tennyson and those

other fellows never make 'amused' rhyme with 'unloosed,' and as for the others, I couldn't say she refused to kiss him, for in the very next verse I assert that she rushes into his arms and smothers him with her endearing kisses. Blamed if I know what we'll do about it. I've got a notion to write to Whittier to ask him."

"How would it do to invent a new word?" asked the doctor. "It would be original, and it would attract attention. Say, for instance, you construct such a word as 'glugloost,' and arrange it in this way:

"When his darling was unloosed
They leaped upon their horses and glugloost?

"Nobody would know what it meant, and it would give the poem a wild, unearthly air, a kind of mysterious, and weirdlike, and awe-inspiring appearance that would make people's hair stand on end."

"It's a good idea," said Markley. "I'll think it over. Much obliged to you. Good morning."

And he bowed himself out. The poem has not yet appeared, and I don't know what word was used to rhyme with "loosed," but I feel certain that the whole poem will be calculated not only to raise people's hair, but to drive them to suicide.

FIGURES AND FISTS.

"Bother it!" and I heard the bookkeeper's fist crash down on the desk till the lamp shade danced in terror.

"What are you swearing at over your ledger?" asked the head of the house, who sat by.

"I beg pardon, sir, I didn't swear. That's not in my line. But I am mad; though if I had known you were here I should have constrained myself. The fact is these figures act just as meanly and hatefully as they can. I have attempted to balance here seven times over; but the stubborn things will not come aright. So I struck them."

The young accountant was nephew to another member of the firm, and was, therefore, treated with some indulgence; though, being a poor widowed sister's only boy, he was bound to work well and keep his place. His uncle found his error for him easily enough; he had actually, seven times over, subtracted thus:

104,09
42,44

61,55

Why was it that this bright mind repeatedly insisted on carrying "1" to the "4"? Seven times in succession! No one can explain. The best of accountants have done the same. It is as if the mind ran in a groove which it had worn for itself. This is the tyranny of thought at times. In this particular case the boy was tired out. He had been without sleep nearly all the previous night, and had come from the dentist's to his desk. Fatigue will often produce such a result.

His uncle, who, by the way, is not generally good at figures, was simply a fresh mind, and the fresh mind made the run along the subtraction without getting off the track. Yet the uncle might have carried "2" to the next lower "2" and subtracted "0." The curious fact is that, if he had committed such an error the first time, he would be likely to do in the second time. You see the mind becomes indignant. The moment it fails it "gets mad." It is as if the figuring faculty shouted: "I know I'm right! It is the figures, not I at fault. I have been over this thing twice. Do you suppose I, an imperious mind, am inferior to these dull figures? Let the figures change. I shall not change." Then, of course, the judgment is obscured. Anger is like a touch of smearing butter on the short-sighted boy's spectacles laid a moment beside his breakfast plate. Anger and arithmetic hate each other like cats and dogs; they never worked together helpfully. An angry man cannot cast simple interest on $112, if you were to give it to him.

Now, what's the use in fisticuffing the ledger? That's the second folly. Poor ledger, you may pound it to pulp, but the thing cannot lie. It is only the man who can lie. The thing to do in such a box is to change the circulation to the brain. Produce a different flow of blood, and fresh blood, too, to the thinking machine. It is not the mind that is at fault. It is the brain, a material machine, which is clogged and out of gear.

Go out for a run round the block. Step into the basement and take hold of a box or two with the porter. Wait till you are rested, and after dinner, or to-morrow morning, having slept over it and "dreamed it out," as you have often done—which is simply the result of rest—go at it again. At all events don't act the fool. Remember that the immortal spirit is always master of dull matter. The spirit of man can bore the Mount Cenis tunnel under the Alps, if it keeps cool, thinks accurately, and does not get mad at the rock. But a man's fists can't even balance a ledger. Your fists cannot laugh; but your mind can enjoy its joke and then subtract straight as eternal truth, "10 minus 4, equals 6."

A BIT TOO LITERAL.

The mistress of the mathematical class was mathematizing for her mathematical pupils, while her mathematical pupils were inwardly mathematizing mathematics.

"Now, suppose," said the mistress, "I had a pound of plums——"

At which point it occurred to her how much better she could illustrate her example to her youthful charges if she really had a pounds of plums. So——

"Mary," she said to a girl of eight, "here's a dime. Go out and get me a pound of plums. And as I'm going to give them, in the end, to the girl who gets the sum right first, be sure, before you buy them, you pinch one or two, just to see that they are wholesome."

A few minutes and Mary had returned. With flushed face and triumphant eyes she approached the teacher's desk as one worthy of commendation, and plumped down a bag of plums—and the dime.

"There!" she said. "I pinched one or two, as you told me, and when the man wasn't looking I pinched the whole lot."

GETTING A COW TO MARKET.

A sick farmer had an obstinate cow which he wished to get to market. On consulting his neighbors he received the following advice: The carpenter said have a screw driver; the furniture man said have a bureau drawer; a small boy offered to holler; the newspaper man said let an editorial leader; the postmaster suggested having a letter carrier; the village toper wanted to do his part, and said he'd take a horn; and the pickle dealer thought a little gherkin would start her. Meantime the farmer expired of exhaustion, and the cow died of grief.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Point Out Value of Aviation to Army.

United States army aviators, after participating for the first time in real military movements in the recent Connecticut maneuvers, have returned to the government station at College Park, Md., determined to awaken further interest of the general staff and the army in military aviation.

To hasten progress of this nation, which was the pioneer in the aviation field, they are urging the war department to invite to College Park the foreign aviators who are to participate in the aviation meet in Chicago. The army aviators seek to have held at the conclusion of the Chicago meet an aëroplane and engine competition. They believe the presence of the foreign aëroplanes and engines as models would point out to American manufacturers the necessity of improvement in their machines to insure patronage of the war department.

$400,000 in Bills Chopped to Bits.

One hundred and fifty-two thousand United States bills, approximately $400,000 in value, were shipped to Washington recently, because they were not worth a red copper any longer. The tremendous slump in their value is due to the fact that they have all done valiant service, and, having outlived their usefulness, were canceled, sliced, perforated, and chopped up.

Colonel George H. Doty, in charge of the Boston subtreasury, superintended the operation. He said that it was the largest operation in the destruction of currency in that city in many years. All currency, after having been destroyed, is sent on to Washington.

Bright young men in the subtreasury have figured that the bills would extend 18 miles if placed one after another, and would make a pile 75 feet high if placed one on top of another.

Extensive Australian Trip is Planned.

A baseball team to be composed largely of the Pacific Coast League players with the addition of a few major-league stars will make a tour of Australia this winter. J. Cal Ewing, former president of the Pacific Coast League, and W. J. C. Kelly, of Sydney, who is head of the Australian Baseball Managers, besides being the representative of Hugh McIntosh and other fight promoters of Australia, are now working on the proposition.

It is planned to take 15 players, including two extra pitchers and catchers, who are to be loaned to the Australian clubs in the games. The promoters of the trip intend to sail from San Francisco November 18, and return January 11. The first games will be played at Honolulu.

New Air Record is Set by Frenchman.

Jules Vedrines, French aviator, hurtling through the air at a speed that at times reached almost two miles per minute, sent all previous Gordon Bennett speed records into the discard at Chicago. Vedrines, known in Europe as "the greatest living airman," made good his claim to that title first by winning the James Gordon Bennett cup and later in an exhibition flight by establishing a new world's speed record for twenty kilometers.

The English equivalent of 20 kilometers is 12.4 miles. Vedrines covered that distance in three laps round the course in the astonishing time of 6 minutes 55.95 seconds. His average speed during the three laps was a trifle faster than 1.79 miles a minute. His rate per hour was nearly 107½ miles.

Vedrines flew a little slower than this in winning the Bennett cup. His fastest lap was made at the rate of about 105½ miles per hour. He covered the whole distance of the race—124.8 miles—in 70 minutes and 56.8 seconds. It is probable, however, that the Frenchman could have forced his machine up to the 107½ miles an hour clip had there been any necessity for it.

He knew an hour before his monoplane darted up over the field that the cup was his if he exercised even ordinary care, for his engine was forty horse power stronger than of any other machine entered in the race.

The type of car he was using is conceded to be the swiftest invented. Consequently he chose to remain on the safe side and cut the corners around the pylons a little wider that he might avoid all possibility of a breakdown.

The monoplane in which Vedrines flew is the handicraft of Armand Deperdussin, and is of a type new to Chicago. It resembles a gigantic flying fish. Its body is cylindrical, and its driver sits in a depression of the fusilage, which is precisely like the driver's seat in a "torpedo" style of racing automobile.

Only Vedrines' head showed above the body of the monoplane when he sprang into the air for his first flight, and the car gave the uncanny impression of flying without human guidance. Its speed was the speed of an arrow. It hurled itself through the air like a projectile, its great propellers whirling in front in an indistinct blur, and its short, outstretched wings cutting their way like knives through the stiff breeze that was blowing.

On the straight stretches of the course the aviator could scarcely be seen, but when he "banked" in the turns at the pylons the spectators below were able to see the top of the car and the cavity in which the Frenchman was seated, which sometimes turned toward the earth at an angle of thirty degrees.

Discuss Treatment for Prisoners.

A meeting of New York State prison wardens, called at Matteawan, N. Y., recently, for the purpose of considering medical treatment of prisoners as soon as they have been received, may result in sweeping reforms if the wardens act favorable on the medical testimony to be presented.

It is the first official step taken in the State along the lines proposed by the American Prison Reform Association at its last meeting in Omaha. The proposed reforms are based on observations of criminals in different penal institutions of the country, by which it is to be shown that most crimes committed are due to incompetency from physical as well as mental defects in the criminal.

The remedy, to consider which the meeting is called, is the inspection of all prisoners, and the correction of such crime-inducing ailments while the subjects are serving terms so that on being set at liberty the cause of criminalty will no longer be present to lead to a recurrence. This was the plan adopted by the American Prison Reform Association, and upon which some of the Middle Western States have already acted.

Doctor George L. Case, of the Elmira Reformatory, says that half of the boys under his care had such abnormal eyes as to make it impossible for them to do any work which required close eye concentration. These boys, it was said, were driven to crime by inability to make a living by honest labor. Even flatfoot was a cause assigned for some becoming criminals.

Record Broken Three Times.

Three times at North Randall, near Cleveland, Ohio, was the automobile record for a mile on a circular dirt track broken. The old record holder, Barney Oldfield, himself smashed the mark first, reducing it from 53 2-5 to 49.03 seconds.

Louis Disbrow did not suffer Oldfield to enjoy his new laurels long, for soon after Oldfield's performance Disbrow sent his car whirling around the course in 49.35 seconds.

Then Oldfield, seeing the track in perfect condition and trusting in his 300 horsepower machine, went out to beat Disbrow's new mark, which he did by another wide margin, negotiating the distance in 47.91 seconds.

Toiled Twelve Years for Daughter's Wedding.

Eleven hundred dollars, the savings of a dozen years, was spent by Giuseppe Annello, a Sicilian laborer, when his daughter, Mary, sixteen, became the bride of Vito Campanello, nineteen. Fifty-nine motor cars, hired by Annello, whirled the wedding guests over the boulevards of Kansas City, and the festivities ended in an elaborate banquet and ball. Annello said he had been saving for the event ever since Mary was a little girl in Sicily.

Big Gold Deposit in Alaska.

Rich mineral lands which were discovered in Alaska in 1882 by Henry E. Wood, and then lost have been relocated after thirty years of search by representatives of several Denver men. The lands contain rich gold ore, and promise to make millionaires out of several men who have been unrelenting in prosecuting the search for the properties.

The discovery is surrounded by circumstances which add another chapter to the romantic side of gold mining. Wood was in Alaska in 1882 investigating mining properties. He was on his return trip when he found one day that he had three hours to spare in making connections on his journey.

He decided to spend the three hours visiting a near-by glacier. While examin-

ing the formation he discovered evidences of rich gold ore. He was unable to stake the claims at that time, but made a number of photographs of the scenery and drew maps of the trails in hopes that on a return trip he could easily find the property.

It was some time before the opportunity to search for the rich claims arose. Representatives were given the pictures and the maps and they started a systematic investigation of the locality. At first the expedition failed. Again the men were sent out and again they failed.

Wood and his associates have filed on the claims and taken all necessary steps to protect them. Development work will begin soon.

Inadequate Wages for Women.

The importance of the organization of women in labor, not only to themselves, but to men, was emphasized by Miss Alice Henry, of Chicago, editor of the official organ of the National Women's Trade Union League, in an address at Labor Temple, in Kansas City.

"The thing that strikes me in my trips through the country," said Miss Henry, "is the interest men everywhere are taking in the women's movement. If the women do not organize to protect themselves the lower wages which they receive will force down the wage scale of the men.

"At the present time 6,000,000 girls in the United States are working for an average wage of $6 a week, which means that some are getting less than that. To be efficient woman laborers must have higher wages and shorter hours."

Alaska Fraud Case Closed.

By order of the acting commissioner of the general land office the register and recorder of the Juneau Alaska land office has placed on record the cancellations for fraud of the thirty-two so-called Cunningham coal claims in the Bering Sea River country.

The lands now are a part of the public domain, and the $52,800 paid into the United States treasury by the claimants is forfeited. They may apply for a writ of mandamus in a District of Columbia court, but cannot appeal from the final decision of Secretary of the Interior Fisher, dated August 29, canceling the claims. The money cannot be refunded to them except by an act of Congress.

Frozen on Hottest Day.

Ike Jones, escaped life prisoner from the Parchman, Miss., prison came near freezing to death in Memphis on the hottest day of the summer. He was unconscious when he was dragged, more dead than alive, from a refrigerator car in the yards. Revived with whisky, Jones was so glad he had been saved from death that he told the police he was wanted in Parchman, Tenn.

Acquitted After Fair Trial.

Victor Allen, last of the Allen clansmen to be tried, was acquitted on the charge of having participated in the Carroll Courthouse murders at Hillsville last March.

It took the jury only half an hour to find its verdict, declaring Allen not guilty of killing Prosecuting Attorney Foster. The verdict brought a demonstration from the spectators, a large portion of whom were women. At the request of counsel for the State the other indictments against him were dismissed.

Allen, who was surrounded by his wife and four children, was much affected when the verdict was given, and as he shook hands with the jurors tears ran down his cheeks.

The acquittal of Victor Allen brought to a close, for the present at least, the trials of the members of the Allen clan for the murders at Hillsville, where the presiding judge, the sheriff, the commonwealth's attorney, a juror, and a witness met death at the hands of the Allen clan. For the crime two men have been sentenced to the electric chair, Floyd Allen and Claude Allen, father and brother of the man acquitted. Two other members of the clan, Friel Allen and Sidna Edwards, were sentenced to long terms in the penitentiary. Sidna Allen, leader of the clan, and Wesley Edwards are still at large.

Mayor Advises Lovelorn Youth.

Far away in Minneapolis, Minn., a young man is looking for trouble. He wrote to Mayor Gaynor, of New York, and asked him to select a young lady and persuade her to become Mrs. H. R. Trimmer. In the letter Trimmer gave a concise description of his ideal, but the mayor did not divulge this information. In his reply to the young man, the mayor told Trimmer he would not find it necessary to go outside his own home town to find the girl of his heart's desire if he plucked up courage enough and went right up to the young woman of his selection and asked her to become his wife.

"There are plenty of girls who would fill your description right out in Minneapolis where you live," wrote the mayor. "Just pluck up courage enough to go right up to them and tell them you want a wife. But maybe that would be too abrupt. I did not go about it that way because I did not have pluck enough, and maybe you haven't. But get around it the best you can and everything will come out all right."

Noted General a Suicide.

General Count Maresuke Nogi and his wife committed suicide as the late mikado's coffin was being carried from the palace grounds in the great funeral procession.

The death by their own hands of the famous general and his wife was in accordance with the ancient Japanese custom and done as a final tribute to their departed emperor and friend, Mutsuhito. The general cut his throat with a short sword, and the countess committed harakiri.

Following the samurari custom, the couple had carefully prepared their plans for killing themselves and timed them so that they would be coincident with the departure forever from Tokio of the dead emperor.

General Nogi and the countess had attended the funeral services of Mutsuhito at the palace, and it was thought they would proceed to Aoyama with the cortège. Instead, at the conclusion of the ceremony at the palace they withdrew to their modest home at Akasaka, a suburb of Tokio, and there began their final preparations for death.

While Count Nogi committed suicide by cutting his throat, the countess followed the ancient Japanese Samural custom of harakiri, that is, self-disembowelment. In the feudal days of Japan the Samurai rather than meet what they considered disgrace would thus take their lives. If they were compelled to surrender a fortified position to the enemy, if some slur was cast on their valor, if their feudal lord was dead, they would thus put an end to an existence which was no longer supportable.

Gradually the custom developed into a privilege, and from about 1500 on a nobleman could demand that form of judicial punishment at his own hands, instead of dying as a common criminal. Around the custom grew a stately ritual, and in the end judicial suicide degenerated into death at the hands of the criminal's closest friend.

Arrayed in his finest clothing, in a measured space screened by white curtains, the victim, his friends, and the official witnesses took their places. The dirk was presented by a second, and at the moment, or as the principal was just stretching out his hand for it, his nearest friend would cut off his head with one sweep of his sword. Then the official witnesses inspected and identified the head, and it was reverently and ceremoniously washed.

Since the decay of feudalism and practice has almost entirely fallen into desuetude.

Extension of the Parcels Post.

Fifteen division superintendents of the Railway Mail Service stationed in important cities from New York to San Francisco were recently in conference with the postmaster general regarding the preparations to be made for handling the large volume of parcel mail that will have to be carried in postal cars. The executive officers of other branches of the postal service are being summoned for similar conferences.

Postmaster General Hitchcock is confident the organization of the new service will be completed in time to put the parcels post into general operation January 1 next. He has decided to place a liberal construction on the law, and include the star routes as well as rural routes, thus extending the service to many additional millions of people. Through inadvertence the act failed to mention star routes.

Hitchcock said there might be some uncertainty as to the establishment of a local parcel post in Alaska January 1 because of the unseasonable time. However, the system between the United States and the Philippines, Hawaiian Islands and Porto Rico will be put into operation January 1.

Panama Canal Will Lengthen Warships.

The requirements of the Panama Canal are playing an important part in the tentative plans of the new superdreadnaught *Pennsylvania*. She is to carry twelve four-inch guns, and have a waterline belt of a thickness of sixteen inches, and in order to support this enormous weight and still permit her to pass through the canal it was found necessary to make her unusually long.

The dimensions of the *Delaware* caused the canal to be widened ten feet six years ago, and since then warships have been built to conform to the width of the canal's locks.

The *Pennsylvania* will have a beam of about 95 feet, and will be 630 feet long, an increase of 55 feet over the length of the *Oklahoma*, which is also of 95 feet beam. Her displacement, it is estimated, may be

31,000 tons, or 3,500 in excess of the *Oklahoma*.

Neither lack of workmen nor failure of the railroad companies to deliver machinery will prevent the launching of the battleship *New York* on schedule, according to Naval Constructor Stocker, who is superintending the work in the New York Navy Yard. His latest report shows that on September 1 the work was 53 per cent finished. Her keel was laid on September 11, 1911.

No date has been fixed for the launching, but it is likely to be late in October.

Comparative Postal Receipts.

Officials of the post office department smiled over a newspaper dispatch from Chicago stating that the receipts of the post office at that city for August had exceeded those of New York City. It was pointed out by the officials that the comparison made with Chicago was with the receipts for the Manhattan post office alone, and did not include a comparison with an aggregate which would include Brooklyn, Long Island City, and other offices within the boundaries of New York City.

In August the postal receipts at Chicago were $1,032,488.60, while the receipts for the same month at the New York post office, which has jurisdiction only over Manhattan and the Bronx, were $1,023,772.70, leaving a balance of only $8,715.99 in favor of Chicago. A statement of receipts from Brooklyn, Long Island City, and other post offices in Great New York was not available, but the postal officials said that such a statement would overwhelmingly surpass that of Chicago.

A Remarkable Exploit.

Leaping from crutches to the saddle and riding without stirrups because of a broken leg he received a short time ago, Jack Fritz, of Oklahoma, kept his seat and subdued one of the worst outlaws of the bunch in the broncho-busting contest.

Charles Chess, of Hyde Park, was given first prize for skillful work on Skylight, a fierce and hard bucking outlaw horse. Chess received $200 and a magnificent silver-mounted cowboy saddle. The other winners were Abe Humphrey, of Cripple Creek; Gene McKay, Cheyenne; Jack Fritz, Oklahoma; Lave Lewman, Bryants, and Charles Thomas, Longmont.

The steer-roping contest was stopped by an agent of the State Humane Society.

Ill from Forced Feeding.

Mary Leigh, the suffragette, who was recently sentenced to five years' imprisonment for wounding John E. Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, with a hatchet, is in a dangerous condition in Mount Joy prison as a result of being forcibly fed.

During her incarceration Miss Leigh has steadfastly refused to eat, and the prison officials have been compelled to give her nourishment through a tube.

One Cent by Wire.

After being called in his hotel, Major W. R. Kuser responded and learned that a telegraphic money order was waiting for him at the main office. He paid fifty cents for a taxicab to go there, and was handed one cent. The order came from a friend, Ralph Eanes, of Durham, N. C., who had paid $1.45 to the telegraph company to send on the penny. Kuser was angry enough to send it back, but desisted when he learned that it would cost another $1.45.

A Good Risk.

"Society women are not good insurance risks because they live too high," says P. D. Gold, junior, president of the American Life convention, in session in Chicago.

"Stuff and nonsense," says Henry L. Rosenfeld, whom Paul Morton made insurance assistant to the president of the Equitable Life Assurance Society.

"Society women not good risks? Huh! Who says so? P. D. Gold. Who is P. D. Gold? Oh, yes, now I know. He's president of an association of smaller life insurance companies. The twenty-five big companies have another organization. Not good risks? Where does he get that idea? They are so good you can't get 'em. It's very hard to insure 'em. If Mr. Gold has any who want to be insured I wish he'd hand them over to me. I'd wire him for the names in a minute if I thought he were turning any down. Good risks? They're the best risks in the world.

"They live longer than any other set of women. Why not? They get the best of everything. Plenty to eat and plenty of rest. Nothing to worry about but trifles. Suppose they do stay up late at night; they sleep the next day. It's the business man of wealth who plays the society game that is a poor risk. A man who stays up all hours and dashes down to the demnition grind in the morning is burning the candle at both ends.

"Watch the headlines of the papers. You see where society women are rescued or divorced or married at Reno or engaged in cleaning the streets or what not, but how often do you see 'society women die'? Not often. Think of how many nice old dowagers there are in the world. Take a run down to Newport and look the verandas over. Good risks? Huh!"

More Deadly than Dynamite.

A package more deadly than dynamite was delivered to the United States hygienic laboratory by a special messenger, who mopped his worried brow with evident relief when he got a receipt for it.

The package contained 50,000 ticks infected with the deadly Rocky Mountain spotted fever, enough to wipe out the population of the nation's capital should they be liberated from the glass tubes which contained them.

The fever carriers were part of those with which the late Surgeon T. B. McClintic was experimenting when he contracted the dread disease. The experiments will be continued in Washington by Doctor John F. Anderson, director of the hygienic laboratory.

Old Man Chisels His Own Mausoleum.

Samuel Stuart, of Gara, Mo., 96 years old, who has lived in New York State seventy-two years, has purchased the stone to adorn his grave and excavated a mausoleum in a large bowlder near his home, giving instructions to his relatives that it serve as a receptacle for his coffin.

Recruits Wanted for the Army.

Sounding a call for more regular troops for the United States army and an equal increase for the militia, General R. K. Evans, chief of the division of military affairs of the United States army, has completed his special report concerning the mimic war and maneuvers held at San Francisco recently. Fifty per cent short on infantry, as short on cavalry, and shorter still on artillery, the army, he declares, is woefully weak.

Pennsy Has New Sprinter.

All doubt as to what college or university James Meredith, the Mercersburg Academy schoolboy, whose sensational sprinting was one of the features of the recent Olympic games in Stockholm will enter, was set at rest when the young athlete registered as a student at the University of Pennsylvania. Within a year he will be eligible to compete for Pennsylvania.

In the Stockholm games Meredith established a new record for the 800 meters and the half mile, going the former distance in 1:51 9-10, and the half mile in 1:52 1-5.

Failed to Make Satisfactory Will.

The name of another eminent lawyer has been added to the long list of men who have failed to make their own wills satisfactorily. He was Abel Thomas, K. C., who wrote his will on a sheet of foolscap in his own hand.

Before the will was admitted to probate an affidavit of due execution was required of David Henry Thompson, now of New York, one of the attesting witnesses.

The Boston Directory of 1833.

Scores of visitors called at the mayor's office for the purpose of inspecting the papers and other relics taken from the corner stone of the old courthouse. Among those who called were descendants of business men and other citizens of Boston in 1833, who desired to obtain facts concerning their grandfathers in most cases.

One citizen, of Melrose, learned for the first time from the Boston directory of 1833 just where the home of his grandfather stood on Prince Street.

The directory for 1833 contained more than 10,000 names, of which 130 represented "persons of color," who were listed separately at the back of the book. The Smiths of that day were 136 in number, as far as directory registration was concerned, and no other name equaled Smith in number.

Despite a contrary opinion, "the fighting race" had arrived in fairly large numbers. There were thirteen Kelleys and one Kelly, three Burks and five Burkes, and two Sheas. There were sixteen Sullivans.

North German Lloyd Line Enjoys a Boom.

That the North German Lloyd Steamship Line is prospering is shown by a statement made by Paul Mankiewitz, one of the managing directors of the Deutsche Bank, and a member of the executive committee of the line, to the correspondent of *The New York Times*. "The North German Lloyd is doing the heaviest business in its history at the present moment," he said. "I estimate that it will pay a dividend for the current year of between 7 and 7½ per cent. The company's shares are selling in the neighborhood of 130, with advancing tendencies."

The great Bremen company is undoubtedly in the midst of a boom business, which has grown to such an extent that it has had to charter bottoms at Ham-

burg for the carriage of its surplus business. Its earnings for the current quarter are said to exceed those of the same period in 1911 by more than $1,000,000.

The Bow of the "Maine" Blown Up.

A small charge of dynamite was exploded in a deeply buried section of the bow of the old battleship *Maine*, for the purpose of loosening projecting plates. The blast performed the service required.

This terminates all the work in connection with the raising of the *Maine*, of which there remains now only a portion of the bow and the forward turret, neither of which is an obstruction to navigation.

A Pugilist Hero.

"Kid" McCoy, former pugilist, recently received the adulation due a hero. According to the keeper of the Parkway Baths, he saved the life of Eva Neville, 14 years old, of Charlestown, Mass., and the fighter admits it.

Miss Neville was visiting in New York with her parents, and one day the family went to Brighton Beach. The girl went in swimming, got beyond her depth, and a roller hit her.

She was having trouble when a man ran out from the beach, swam to her, and pulled her ashore. The manager of the baths recognized McCoy.

New Battleship Armor.

The launching of the new battleship *Paris* at the end of September excited considerable interest in engineering and shipbuilding circles.

The armor plating on the new vessel is made entirely of a new metal of French invention, which will, it is expected, render a battleship less vulnerable to shell fire, and mark a new epoch in naval shipbuilding.

The new metal contains a good proportion of chromium and nickel.

Mad Bull Causes Havoc.

After wrecking a barber shop, an express office, the mail room at the Union station, attacking a street car, knocking down a little girl, and chasing terrified pedestrians, a Jersey bull, that ran amuck in Savannah, Ga., recently, was roped and thrown in true Western style by a small negro on a mule.

When the bull invaded the barber shop, Joseph Howard, the proprietor, took refuge in a dry-goods box, and his wife narrowly escaped being trampled. Crossing the street the animal headed for the Southern Express Company offices. Clerks, porters, and packages flew in all directions. The bull then headed for the station mail room, and soon invaded West Broad Street, lunged headlong into a street car, fell to its knees, recovered, and went on again until roped.

Horse Saves Girl Rider.

The wisdom of a saddle horse in attempting to leap over a motor car that in another second would have struck it probably saved the life of Miss Emma Rieger, its rider.

The motor car, going at a high speed, was driven by William McSherry, of Oklahoma City.

The motor and the saddle horse met at a street intersection and a collision was imminent. As the horse came within a foot of the car it made a leap, presumably in an effort to jump high enough to clear the automobile. The attempt failed, and the animal landed squarely in the rear portion of the car, throwing Miss Rieger to the ground. Her injuries were not serious.

McSherry and the horse, strange to say, were uninjured.

United States Submarine Sets New Record.

The United States navy submarine *F-1* holds a world's record for depth, after diving 283 feet off Point Diablo, in San Francisco Bay. The submarine remained at this depth for ten minutes, cruising at a speed of six knots, and finally rising to within nineteen feet of the surface with the ease of a sporting porpoise. The *F-1*, under command of Lieutenant James B. Howell, left its berth at the Union Iron Works and cruised out through the Golden Gate and circled a pilotboat eight miles out. It was on the return trip, while passing through the deep water into which the steamer *Rio de Janeiro* dived several years ago, that the *F-1* took its long slant.

Held Up the Wrong Train.

Three bandits, plentifully supplied with high explosives and an automobile, lay in wait twelve miles east of New Orleans, a short time ago, all ready to rob the New Orleans and Cincinnati express on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad.

When they heard the puffing of a locomotive they set their holdup plans in motion, but after they had halted the locomotive they found it was hauling a long line of freight cars. Covering their retreat with leveled guns, the men made off in their automobile.

Percentage of Mulattoes Growing.

A preliminary statement showing the number and proportion of mulattoes among the negroes enumerated at the thirteenth decennial census of the United States, taken as of April 15, 1910, has been issued by Director Durand, of the bureau of the census, department of commerce and labor.

In 1910 there were in the United States 9,827,763 negroes, of whom 2,050,686, or 20.9 per cent, were reported as mulattoes. In 1890 there were 1,132,060 mulattoes reported, or 15.2 per cent of all the negroes, and in 1870 584,049, or 12 per cent.

A Great Future for Portugal.

Should Portugal ever again become a monarchy it is certain that Cyrus E. Woods, the American minister, would no longer be persona grata. The local republican press is reprinting with enthusiasm what Mr. Woods has been saying during his vacation about the present government and the various royalist attempts to overthrow it. The latter he characterizes as "mere peasant insurrections directed by professional adventurers from Spain," while the treatment of royalist prisoners, about which so much has been written in the press of the continent and America, he declares to have been "much better than that received by prisoners, either North or South, in the American Civil War." The only thing, he adds, that the royalists have succeeded in obtaining is the services of an absolutely conscienceless press agent. Mr. Woods is quoted here from a London paper as saying:

"The general impression in America and central Europe seems to be that Portugal is still in a state of great unrest, but that is all wrong. Of course, there must inevitably be a lingering feeling of soreness between the Republican and Monarchial factions, but that is gradually dying down, and the country is in a tranquil state.

"Further, there are innumerable indications that Portugal is on the eve of a new era of prosperity. The authorities are alive to the possibilities, as is shown by the fact that they have just subsidized a second line of freight and passenger steamers running a cargo service to and from the United States, and they have made contracts for the construction of huge irrigation works for the benefit of agricultural districts.

"On all hands there are signs of progress, and I know of no country more rich in mineral resources. There are tin, coal, iron, and copper in profusion, and the country is ripe for development. Recently an American company opened some tin mines in the north of Portugal, and they are yielding a handsome return. Portugal suffers through the lack of capital, but that is forthcoming now, for it is only recently that financiers and big industrial corporations have realized the full possibilities of this hitherto dormant country."

As to defenses it may be of interest to add that the naval commission, which has had the subject in hand ever since the establishment of the republic, has just made its final report.

In place of three 19,000-ton ships, armed with 10 12-inch guns, suggested by the commission, there are to be built three 20,000-ton ships, carrying 8 13.5-inch weapons. Three scouts of 3,500 tons and 26 knots speed are to be built, instead of the 3,000-ton 22-knot vessels recommended. As regards the smaller craft there are no changes, and the Portuguese navy will be strengthened by 12 820-ton 30-knot destroyers and 9 submarines, 3 of the latter to be built in Portugal.

Severe Lightning at Sea.

The freighter *Bristol City*, of the Bristol Line, came into port from St. Vincent, C. V. I., with a shattered foretopmast as a result of an electrical storm at sea on the voyage. Lightning struck the mast, splitting it down for some distance, and making the whole ship tremble.

The chief engineer was stunned and thrown five feet, and the mate was rendered unconscious. Neither was seriously hurt, but the mate was laid up in bed two days.

Freight Arteries for New York City.

New York has three railroads that land their passengers in the heart of the city—the Pennsylvania, the New York Central, and the New York, New Haven & Hartford. Eight other lines transfer their passengers to ferryboats or to the trains of the Hudson Tunnel system.

New York has only one railroad that hauls freight into the heart of the city over its own rails. This is the New York Central. The New Haven has its freight terminal in the Bronx, the Baltimore & Ohio on Staten Island. The other lines are dependent upon floats to carry their cars across the Hudson or over the bay to Brooklyn.

Yet, notwithstanding this handicap, the inbound and outbound freight handled by

the railroads to and from Manhattan alone amounts in the year to 5,250,000 tons, which is 17,500 tons each business day. This is about 580 carloads.

Such is the commercial force of New York that it magnetizes the industry of the country and draws hither the surplus products of the whole country, either for consumption here, for manufacture, or for export.

The shipments include $35,000,000 worth of the surplus products of the country's farms, $60,000,000 worth from the forests, $40,000,000 from the mines, $225,000,000 of the surplus manufactures of the country.

Standard Oil Wins Control in Sweden.

The war for the control of the oil market in the Scandinavian countries has resulted in practically a complete victory for the Standard Oil Company. The only concession obtained by the Scandinavian Association from the big American company was that the price of oil in Scandinavian territory should not exceed the price asked in any other European country.

The Standard Oil Company obtained an entrance into the country by an agreement with existing interests to take over the distribution system for oil in Scandinavia.

There was much opposition to the scheme by the Small Dealers' Association, which passed a resolution in favor of government intervention to prevent the establishment of a Standard Oil monopoly in the Swedish market.

The Austrian minister made every effort to secure the admission to Sweden of Austrian oil, which has been kept out by the Swedish safety regulations, as it does not meet the requirements for safe transport, being too light.

Decrease in the Navy Enlistment.

With the enlisted force of the navy nearly six thousand men below its normal strength, the navy department recently began an active campaign to get recruits for the fighting ships.

The total enlisted force now is 46,766, or 5,634 less than required by law.

One of the chief causes of the falling off was the long delay by Congress in passing the naval appropriation bill, but this was complicated by heavy demands for men on farms in the Middle West. The navy, however, is looking forward to the autumn, when hundreds of men probably will be thrown out of work. Steps already have been taken to establish recruiting stations in Denver, Salt Lake City, and Richmond, while traveling parties have been sent into the country.

New York State Revenues Total $47,000,000.

New York State's revenue for the fiscal year ending October 1, is expected to total at least $47,000,000, or more than $3,000,000 more than was estimated January 1 last. The increase is due to inheritance taxes paid on large estates this year, and increased taxes from the Corporation Tax Bureau.

The tax on the estates of John Jacob Astor, Benjamin Guggenheim, and Isidor Straus, victims of the *Titanic* disaster, will not be paid until the next fiscal year.

Up to September 1, last, the total receipts were $43,643,691, including the following: Excise taxes, $9,376,144.01; transfers (inheritance tax), $9,617,844.23; stock transfer (stamp tax), $3,129,771; mortgages, $1,853,324.45; motor vehicles, $1,026,156.25; corporations, $7,493,163.68; organization of corporations, $424,928.51; secured debt tax, $1,368,468.35; direct tax, $6,220,105.37.

Greatest Athlete in the World to Become a "Pirate."

Next year, if Uncle Sam does not object, there will be another star added to the redskin galaxy of diamond warriors. Jim Thorpe, the greatest all-around athlete in the world, is said to have promised President Barney Dreyfus, of the Pittsburgh Pirates, to join the team next season. But before he can join the team Thorpe must get the consent of the government. He belongs to the Sac and Fox tribe of Indians, who are still wards of Uncle Sam, and who must have consent of a government agent before they can transact any business.

In another year Thorpe will be through Carlisle College. He would not be the only Indian in the big leagues. Chief Bender, a Carlisle man, has been one of the mainstays of the Philadelphia Athletics for ten years. Big Chief Meyers is one of the most important of the New York Giants. There is scarcely a league in the country that does not boast of one or two Indian players.

Hoodoos of Ball Players.

"Baseball players are superstitious, and some go to extremes in this respect," says Johnny Evers, the brainy second sacker of the Chicago Nationals. "On the Cubs' team, for instance, I am, I believe, more inclined to fear jinx than any other member of the club. In batting practice before the game the general belief is that if you are not hitting the ball hard or up in the air you will bat well in the game ofttimes as the result. In many cases I have seen a player hit two or three balls hard and on the line, and then go to the bench and refuse to bat any more, saying: 'I'm saving mine for the game.'

"Going to the different parks in the cars, the sight of a funeral along the road is regarded as an ill omen. The same applies to a cripple, unless you toss him a coin. A wagonload of empty barrels is a good sign. Frequently a man, having gone a mile out of the way to purchase something on a day when his club happened to win, will continue to travel the roundabout pathway so long as the club is in that particular city, or until his teammates lose.

"Watch a man when the inning is over. If the inning previous was favorable to the player, observe him go over and be particular to locate the same spot to lay down his glove. You doubtless have often seen a player attired in a soiled and far from presentable uniform. Beneath all that lurks our old friend, the jinx. The player will stick to the dirty garments so long as his team is winning. When the streak is broken the laundryman gets a chance at his clothing, but not before.

"There are hoodoos—hundreds of them—to the ball player's way of thinking. Take Pittsburgh, for instance. The worst hoodoo in that town is the bug who daily squats back of first base, making life miserable for the man playing that sack. Time and again I have heard the yowls of the individual, but never have succeeded in locating him.

"Every first sacker in the National League has heard the yowling of this human coyote. It's little wonder ball players often lose their temper during the heat of battle, and become guilty of acts that are far from becoming to the profession.

"Recall how Manager Chance refused to have the Cubs pose for a team picture during the closing days of the league race of 1908. He was especially fearful that the photographer might work a jinx on the players and jeopardize our chances of beating Detroit. Reulbach is a mighty suspicious chap. I remember how one of Ed's friends approached him two years ago when the big pitcher was mowing them down for his record of 14 straight victories. The fan wanted Reulbach's cap, the one he had worn during all those games, but Ed refused to part with the headgear. Yes, the ball player is to be listed only with the actor, or the sailor when it comes to the superstitious phase of life."

Noted Inventor Dead.

Edward A. Calahan, inventor of several important telegraphic devices, died of heart disease at his home in Brooklyn. Mr. Calahan was born at Boston in 1838, and was educated in the common schools of that city. His first position was in a Boston telegraph office. He came to New York in 1861 as chief operator of the Western Union Telegraph Company, in Manhattan, and made his residence in Brooklyn.

In 1867 he invented the gold and stock ticker, and organized the Gold & Stock Telegraph Company. In 1871 he organized the American District Telegraph Company. In 1872 he resigned as general superintendent of the Gold & Stock Telegraph Company and went to London, England, where, with P. B. Delany he organized the Exchange Telegraph Company, Limited. In 1873 he invented the American District automatic messenger call box.

His last invention was the multiplex telegraph system, by which it was made possible to transmit 72 different messages over the same wire.

Boy Blown Up by Bomb.

Frank Cassidy, 10 years old, of Jersey City, was walking along the viaduct that leads from Hoboken to West Hoboken with some boy companions one afternoon recently, when he picked up a piece of iron pipe about six inches in length with a fuse at the end of it. Not knowing what it was, he carried it home under his arm, occasionally using it as a club to bang against trees and fences on the way.

When he got home he went into the yard and was beating a rock with it when there was an explosion that could be heard for blocks. The piece of pipe was blown to atoms and the little boy knocked spinning to the other end of the yard and against the fence, where he lay unconscious.

An ambulance rushed with him to the City Hospital, where it was found that pieces of the iron pipe had lodged in his head, body, and legs, and that he was in a critical condition.

The police believe the pipe was nothing else than a bomb, either placed on the viaduct to destroy it, or hidden there for future use.

A New Way of Killing Flies.

Millis Knickerbocker, an electrical wizard, has invented a new way of killing flies. He says it beats the swatter, or sticky paper. He shocks them with electricity, and then drowns them in soap suds. It is a very simple method, according to Knicker-

bocker. All the fly has to do is to get in the circuit. Knickerbocker's fly killer is a round grooved piece of wood eighteen inches long wound with German-silver wire. The wire-bound roll is placed over a small tin trough filled with soap water into which the flies fall. As soon as a fly touches the wires the victim is electrocuted.

Buoy Relic of Andre.

A telegram from Tromso states that the Norwegian steamer *Beta* discovered on September 1, to the south of Foreland, Spitzbergen, a buoy marked "Andre's North Pole Expedition, 1896, No. 10."

The buoy was made of cork and covered with copper, and bore an iron plate fixed by copper screws.

The Prince of Wales in Oxford.

The Prince of Wales when he goes to Oxford University will occupy the quarters in the tower of Hagdalen College, which were reserved for the son of Henry VII. in the 15th century, the last time a Prince of Wales attended Magdalen College.

The precedent set by his grandfather, King Edward, will thus not be followed.

The latter when attending Christ Church lived, not in the college, but at Frewen Hall, beside the Union.

The young prince will thus get more of the undergraduate life that his grandfather did, but the proposal to have him take part in the college games has been rejected.

A Very Busy Catcher.

A world's record for the catching of consecutive games has been established this year by Lou Ritter, the popular, hard-working, wide-awake catcher of the champion Utica team. Lou is credited with having played in each and every game played by the Uticas this season, and has got everything that came his way. The records show that he is credited with having donned his mask and protector in 139¼ games for the 1912 champions of the State League. These games have ranged anywhere from 3 to 16 innings of play, but Lou was right there all the time. He fielded for a mark of .971, and hit at a .251 clip.

You couldn't keep Lou out of the game. He would die if he had to sit on the bench and watch a game. He was extremely lucky this year, not having an injury which disabled him in any manner. Of course, he received his share of foul tips, but he just "shook them off" and gamely went back to work. Lou has been playing baseball for the past 18 years, and is still a young fellow when it comes to playing the game. He goes after everything, and is in the game at all times.

Stanage, of the Detroit team, in the American League, caught 141 games last season, but they were not consecutive. Chief Meyers led the National with 128. Blue, of the Piqua team, of the Ohio State League, caught 136 games last season. Cheek, of the Albany team, led the State League last season with 107 games.

Measuring the Soot Fall.

To measure rain fall or snow fall is not a difficult matter because of the quantity of each and the almost uniform distribution over a large area. The measurement of soot fall is, however, another matter, because of what might be termed the elusiveness of soot and the variations in amount over even a small area.

In the latest attempt to estimate soot fall in London, four measuring devices were used, each having a surface of four square feet. They were in the form of wide funnels, which were connected with high bottles. Upon the estimates secured in this way it was calculated that the soot fall of London per year was 46,050 tons.

When the question of measuring the soot fall of Pittsburgh was raised in connection with the smoke investigation of the industrial research department of the University of Pittsburgh, various methods described were discussed, and it was decided to use a modified form of the London method.

Twelve "soot collection stations" were selected. These were selected with a view of covering thoroughly the city, and of securing typical conditions in the various parts of the city. On the roof of a building in each of these sections, permission was secured to place a glass jar. This jar is 12 inches in height and four inches in diameter. The jar is left at the station for one month, and is then taken to the laboratory of the industrial research department of the university, where the contents are analyzed. This process is to be continued for 12 months. As substances other than soot are likely to fall into the jar, the soot fall is measured not by the total weight of the contents, but by the weight of the tar in the jar.

Already five collections have been made from the 12 stations. No figures are to be given out, however, until 12 collections have been made. There will then be accurate data on the soot fall of Pittsburgh. The next problem will be to find out how much of this soot fall comes from the mills, how much from the railroads, how much from various power plants and buildings, and how much from households.

Sacrifices Valuable Jewels.

The personal effects of General Daniel E. Sickles, Civil War commander and former United States minister to Spain, did not, as the general had feared, go under the sheriff's hammer to satisfy a judgment of about $8,000, which was secured against the aged soldier. General Sickles' wife, who was a belle in the court of Spain when the veteran wooed and won her in Madrid in 1871, and from whom he has been parted for more than 27 years, visited the offices of the trust company and satisfied the judgment. She did this, it was learned, through the sacrifice of valuable jewels she possessed, some of which she had worn when a girl before General Sickles met her in Spain.

Burning Big Peach Orchards.

The largest peach orchard in the world, the one that has been first to supply the market with Georgia peaches for many years, was recently burned at Americus, fifty miles south of Macon, Ga. The orchard contained 225,000 bearing trees. These were cut down by negroes at the direction of the owners of the Bagley Orchard estate, and piled in huge heaps. Oil was poured on the brush, and in the morning negroes ran from one pile to the next starting the bonfires almost simultaneously.

While the peach crop brought much money into Georgia during the past season, the receipts running into the millions, the owners of this grove failed to realize as much as they had expected. Thousands of bushels of peaches went to waste. They destroyed the orchard, believing that they can raise cotton at a greater profit on the same ground. Other peach growers are threatening to chop down their trees and use their land for general farming, but there are thousands of acres in peach orchards that will remain standing, especially in the Fort Valley district.

Refused to Disband.

All but one of the Teachers' Professional Unions or Syndicates, in France, have voted to disband. The Paris Union refused to disintegrate, and the cabinet decided to prosecute it for violation of the law of 1884.

The government ordered the Teachers' Unions to dissolve because of the action of the Congress of Teachers' Societies, held at Chambery in August, when resolutions approving antimilitarism were adopted. The prefects of the various departments were ordered to inform the societies that they would have until September 10 to disband, after which date legal action would be taken against the societies still in existence.

A Good Example in Clean Streets.

When early risers appeared on the business streets of Pittsfield, Mass., one morning in September, they found on the sidewalks in front of fifty business places the words: "Cleaned by the Board of Trade." This action was taken by the civic committee of the board, which requested merchants to clean their walks on Saturday nights in order that the city may present a good appearance to Sunday tourists.

Little notice was taken of the committee's request. Hence that morning, clad in khaki uniforms, the committee members themselves did the work. The sidewalks fronting Mayor K. B. Miller's property, the First Baptist Church, and the office of one of the newspapers which had been advocating the desired improvement were cleaned and branded among others.

The street cleaners were President George H. Southerd, of the board of trade, a former New York banker; George H. Cooper, coal dealer; Joseph Ward Lewis, J. Arthur Baker, Ralph M. Dennett, attorneys, and Carl B. Lindhold, a civil engineer.

First Negro Promoted in Army.

In his promotion to the rank of major, just announced at the war department, Charles Young, of the Ninth Cavalry, a negro, becomes the first man of his race to attain that grade in the regular army of the United States. Major Young is also the only negro officer of the army who was graduated from the military academy at West Point.

He has served with the Ninth Cavalry, Tenth Cavalry, and Twenty-fifth Infantry, all negro regiments, during his entire service, with the exception of a year's service in the Seventh Cavalry, a white regiment.

He is now attached to the American legation at Monrovia, Liberia, and at the request of the Liberian government has been permitted to assist in the organization and instruction of the Liberian army. His record, it is said at the war department, is without blemish.

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